e-Ncore Work Group Report & Recommendations

Report to the NSHE e-Learning Taskforce
March 2015

Standing on the shoulders of giants…

First, and at its core, NSHE possesses the skills and talent among its regular faculty and e-learning program staff to take e-learning to new levels of impact…Second, NSHE students are willing and eager to study online…Third, e-learning program staff throughout NSHE institutions are knowledgeable, capable, and passionate about their responsibilities…Fourth, the collaborate and can--do spirit within NSHE is another area that merits a call out, particularly the efforts of its 2-year colleges and Nevada State College to share a common learning management system, to adopt and perfect the Quality Matters online course and program certification protocol, and other measures that will promote seamless integration across a bigger academic landscape for their students.

> *From: E-Learning and Higher Education's Iron Triangle: Opportunity, Affordability, and Student Success at NSHE   Richard N. Katz & Associates, February 11, 2013, page 10*

In a nutshell, NSHE has become an e-learning powerhouse. NSHE student enrollments in distance education classes now stand at nearly 1/3 of total enrollments…Further, e-learning enrollments are growing far faster than are enrollments "on the ground". Two of your campuses are now "e-learning dominant" with e-learning enrollments accounting for more than 1/2 of the enrollment total. Your colleagues have supported e-learning enrollment growth in excess of 400% in the past decade. This is extraordinary.

> *From: Letter to Chancellor Daniel Klaich from Richard Katz, February 15, 2013, page 1*

The e-Ncore Work Group was created by the eLearning Taskforce and given the responsibility to develop recommendations regarding the specific elements of a General Education Collaboration. The president of each institution nominated a faculty member and eLearning administrator to represent their institution on the Work Group.

The Work Group convened in March 2014 and met from March until December (excluding the summer when faculty were off-contract). The Work Group brought together the expertise of NSHE's eLearning administrators and experienced eLearning educators from each of the NSHE institutions. The Final Report is presented as an (1) Executive Summary of Work Group recommendations and (2) a set of appendices to the Work Group recommendations that provide needed detail, explanation and context.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: e-Ncore WORK GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS:

Organization

1. Proposed NSHE Consortium name: if the proposed collaboration is approved, the name of the NSHE consortium for General Education classes should be determined by system marketing professionals. It is important that the consortium name create no unintended confusion (must be distinct and separate from the individual NSHE institutions).

2. Proposed Organizational/Administrative Structure: a campus-centric model (decentralized)

    *   Collaboration administrator and an Instructional Designer to provide needed coordination. Accountability: reports to the Vice-chancellor for Academic & Student Affairs
    *   Creation of a Steering Committee (membership: a faculty representative and DE administrator from each NSHE campus).
    *   Creation of a Master Course Review Committee (Membership: Instructional Designer/ representatives from each campus - faculty and instructional designers - that reports to the Steering Committee and assists campuses during the development of collaboration classes.

3. Intent: collaboration is designed to improve student access to higher education in Nevada, provide relief for students delayed in their pathway for completion, and improve student completion rates. In addition, position NSHE to respond to increased competition.

4. Tuition and Fees: as part of the collaboration, each student will identify a "home" institution upon admission. The student will then pay the tuition rate of that institution for any collaboration-related classes. Each institution will retain the tuition and fees for the classes it teaches/delivers as part of the collaboration.

5. Special Fees: Do not impose any special fees to help fund the Collaboration at this time.

6. Collaboration Model: the collaboration is modeled after the highly successful Tennessee Board of Regents collaboration (ROCC: Regents Online Campus Collaborative), which was founded in 2001, and to date, has served more than 14,000 online students.

ROCC Handbook for Students:
http://www.rodp.org/sites/default/files/ROCC_General_booklett.pdf

ROCCC Website: www.rodp.org

7. Annually review collaboration-related enrollment and revenue with NSHE academic officers to ensure no adverse impacts to individual campuses

NSHE General Education Course Collaboration

8. General Education Collaboration classes: Twenty-six classes have been identified for inclusion in the General Education collaboration. The courses should be launched in three phases.

RECOMMENDED e-Ncore GENERAL EDUCATION COLLABORATION MASTER COURSES/PHASING

A special sub-committee of the e-Ncore Work Group was formed to determine the appropriate data-based strategy for identifying General Education Master Courses for the proposed e-Ncore collaboration. Working with Institutional Research staff at NSHE campuses and the Chancellor'sl Office, the sub-committee focused on courses that were:

*   High enrollment and high demand
*   Needed to complete a degree
*   Consistent in demonstrating enrollment demand that exceeded course availability at some/all NSHE campuses

Based on the analysis of data, the General Education sub-committee of the e-Ncore Work Group recommended the following twenty-six classes/phasing sequence:

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
HIST 101	PSC 101	ANTH 101
ENG 101	PSY 101	COM 101
SOC 101	ECON 102	MATH 127
MATH 126	ENV 101	MUS 125
CHEM 121	HIST 102	MATH 181
MUS 121	ENG 102	PHIL 102
	MATH 120	ECON 103
	*ART 160	
*BIO 189/190/191/196/197	*BIO 189/190/191/196/197	*BIO 189/190/191/196/197

9.   Module-based course content: Course content should be designed in a module format that is sharable.

10.   Master Courses: Utilize Master Courses as the most effective approach in support of an NSHE collaboration of General Education classes. Course content determined by faculty (course content experts).

11.   Single LMS: NSHE should adopt Canvas by Instructure as the single Learning Management System for the collaboration. A single LMS will create a consistent learning environment among NSHE institutions and facilitate content design, faculty training, faculty and student technical support, encourage development of NSHE institutional collaboration.   The adoption will build on the commitment of five NSHE institutions that have already migrated to Canvas by Instructure.

12.   ADA Compliance: A commitment to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance for course design and instructional technology support to ensure access for everyone

13.   Content Repository: A course content repository is an essential element of the collaboration and should be adopted in support of the collaboration. The repository should include modules representing relevant NSHE faculty developed content, Open Educational Resources (OER) content, and appropriate Third Party (vendor) content – as determined by faculty (course content experts).

14.   Course Standard: all collaboration-related courses will be designed to comply with current NSHE Common Course Numbering guidelines.

15.   Quality Matters: NSHE institutions should adopt the Quality Matters National Rubric as part of a comprehensive set of strategies to support the General Education Collaboration.

16.   OER Content: the NSHE collaboration should use open-source solutions as an element of the shared course content repository. The Steering Committee will be tasked to work with the Instructional Designer review and affirm appropriate OER content and textbooks.

17.   Textbooks: The e-Ncore Work Group endorses efforts to control textbook and related course material costs utilizing one or more of four strategies: 1) developing courses that do not require a textbook (no textbook option), 2) shifting to eTexts or custom eTexts that significantly reduce the cost to students and simply distribution, 3) develop fully open-source supported courses where appropriate, and 4) where faculty agree, adopting a single textbook to reduce student cost.

18.   Instructional Designers from the NSHE institutions will create a "collaboration within the collaboration" to share talents and expertise in support of the development of Master General Education classes.

Faculty

19. Faculty Recruitment and Hiring: Each NSHE institution will be responsible for recruiting and hiring faculty to teach in the collaboration.   It is at the discretion of the institution to determine whether or not both full- and part-time faculty will participate, but it is the recommendation of the e-Ncore Work Group that each institution utilize both full and part-time faculty where possible.

20. Faculty Compensation and Workload: each NSHE institution will use its existing compensation and workload policies in support of the collaboration

21. Faculty Training: The NSHE General Education Collaboration will require a minimum program of related training sessions in support of the best practices for teaching online. NSHE institutions will coordinate with the collaboration administrator and Instructional Designer to provide the required initial training as well as recurring/refresher training.

22. Instructional Expectations: The collaboration should establish a minimum set of expectations for faculty teaching collaboration classes. The expectations should reflect the best practices of the Quality Matters rubric.

Student Services

23. Each NSHE institution provides related virtual student services for the NSHE collaboration sections the institution teaches and the students the institution serves. The e-Ncore Steering Committee, along with NSHE student services professionals, will work with each NSHE institution to review student services available and support efforts to make student support seamless across NSHE institutions.

Initial Funding

24. Collaborations such as the proposed NSHE General Education Collaboration are increasingly common nationwide and predecessors have had success securing multiple year grants to help with initial set-up and launch of the statewide collaboration. This option should be pursued to help underwrite the development and launch of the NSHE Collaboration, if approved.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSE NSHE ONLINE COLLABORATION

1. The proposed collaboration responds to the increased competition Nevada will experience in eLearning.

   Students in the Nevada are studying online, studying online at institutions beyond the perimeters of their home campuses, and in some cases studying beyond the borders of Nevada. For them, there is no drama – the emergence of unbundled education offerings online to them is as natural as their ability to select music from Apple, books from Amazon, or movies from Netflix. NSHE students are building their own online educational experiences for a variety of reasons that are important to them. If NSHE is not able or willing to enlarge the boundaries of its current offerings, students will do it for themselves.

2. The proposed collaboration replicates what is happening nationally.

   There is a national trend for the development of statewide consortiums to collaborate in eLearning initiatives similar to what is being proposed for NSHE. There are consortiums in Michigan, Maryland, California, Georgia, Tennessee, Colorado, Florida and New York to name a few. The proposed collaboration will position Nevada to provide similar services and course offerings to Nevada students as other states are already doing.

3. The proposed collaboration improves access to higher education for Nevadans.

   NSHE institutions constantly work to provide and extend quality educational opportunities to all Nevadans. As part of the Complete College America Alliance, Nevada has committed to achieving a significant increase in the number of students who graduate with a degree or credential of value in the coming years. Additionally, the state legislature has implemented a performance-based funding formula for NSHE, under which institutions are funded for course and degree completers. Add to this the increased demand from Nevada students for more sophisticated and varied course delivery methods, and it is readily apparent that NSHE institutions must continue to build on existing e-learning course offerings. The proposed collaboration will support effort.

4. The proposed collaboration reduces the barriers to timely degree completion.

   The proposed collaboration is designed to improve student access to higher education in Nevada, provide relief for students delayed in their pathway for completion, and increase student completion rates.   In addition, position NSHE to respond to increased competition.

5. The proposed collaboration is patterned after a successful collaboration in Tennessee.

   The proposed collaboration is modeled after the highly successful Tennessee Board of Regents collaboration (ROCC: Regents Online Campus Collaborative), which was founded in 2001, and to date, has served more than 14,000 online students.

   http://www.rodp.org/sites/default/files/ROCC_General_booklet.pdf
   www.rodp.org

6. The proposed collaboration is designed NOT to compete for students within NSHE campuses but rather to assist existing students that are blocked from progressing and to bring new cohorts of students to NSHE campuses (adult learners).

   The proposed collaboration will focus on improving access to higher education. As this method of instructional delivery matures, it is a viable option for working adults, active duty military personnel, public safety (fire, police, EMT), and allied health professionals as well as for those in remote/rural areas, students with young children, traditional students seeking to maximize their class schedules, and those with accessibility needs.

7. The proposed collaboration promotes innovations/collaboration amongst NSHE faculty and eLearning programs.

   The proposed collaboration will promote innovations/collaboration amongst NSHE faculty and eLearning programs through the adoption of Instructure Canvas as the single Learning Management system for the collaboration. A single LMS will create a consistent learning environment among NSHE institutions and facilitate innovative and collaborative efforts amongst NSHE faculty and eLearning programs. This will facilitate content design that can be easily shared amongst institutions, faculty training, student and faculty technical support, and encourage development of NSHE institutional collaboration.

8. The proposed collaboration builds upon the success NSHE has had with its eLearning programs.

   In order to meet the rising demand from students, 6 important elements are being examined in a voluntary statewide effort that is being coordinated by the campus e-learning directors group. Areas of concern include: infrastructure, faculty development and support, student services, accessibility, and the policies that govern distance education. The proposed collaboration will continue these voluntary efforts to further improve the quality of eLearning in Nevada.

9. The proposed collaboration respects the faculty role in curriculum development and as content experts.

   Twenty-six courses have been identified for inclusion in the General Education collaboration. Course content should be designed in a module format that is sharable. The proposed collaboration will utilize the Master Courses as the most effective approach in support of an NSHE collaboration of General Education Courses. The course content will be determined by NSHE faculty (course content experts) from each NSHE institution in a collaborative approach.

10. The proposed collaboration allows each campus to retain control/responsibility for its students.

    Each student will identify a "home" institution upon admission. The student will then pay the tuition rate of that institution for any collaboration classes. The student's FTE will remain with the home institution. Each institution will retain the tuition and fees for the classes it teaches/delivers as part of the collaboration.

11. The proposed collaboration provides for coordinated PD opportunities and community-building amongst NSHE campuses.

    The General Education Collaboration will require a minimum program of related training sessions in support of the best practices for teaching online. The training sessions will be shared with faculty from across NSHE, which will result in a community building among the faculty from NSHE campuses.   In addition, a proposed Center for Excellence will foster opportunities for faculty, staff and administrators to interact, to train, and to share.

12. The proposed collaboration will seek grant funding to underwrite its development and launch

    Mindful of the fiscal realities within NSHE, the proposed collaboration, if approved, would seek grant-based funding to develop and launch the General Education collaboration classes. No collaboration-related student fees will be attached to the classes nor will individual campuses be asked to provide collaboration-related funding.

PROPOSED e-NCORE COLLABORATION: A STUDENT SCENARIO

What will the proposed NSHE GE Collaboration do for students enrolled in NSHE institutions?

Consider, for a moment, a young woman living in Sandy Valley who wants to be a Nevada State Scorpion. We'll call her Susan. Susan wants a degree in nursing from Nevada State College. Eventually, she aspires to become one of the Pack and pursue a Masters in Nursing from UNR. But right now, she has a plan, and she is counting on the Nevada System of Higher Education to help her reach her goals.

At a Nevada State Open House, she meets an instructor in Biology that inspires her. (Note: she could be inspired at an Open House at any of the NSHE schools.) In addition, she meets an academic advisor and some NSC students who convince her that NSC and NSHE would be the best place for her to get her BS and then later her Masters in Nursing.

Susan, though, needs more than just inspiration. Because her only means of transportation is a Dodge RAM 3500 dually, it is a hardship to travel to Henderson, NV (70 miles away) when she can take classes online and at the Pahrump Campus of Great Basin College, nearer to her home by 30 miles. Besides, Susan travels to Pahrump periodically to shop and to get medical care for her young daughter. She also wants to take online courses at UNLV and CSN along the way, as needed, to keep to her timeline for graduation.

Wouldn't it be great if NSC/NSHE was able to coordinate registration and enrollment, find available quality online courses when needed, reduce time away from classes, and help Susan to move quickly to a degree without a lot of paperwork obstacles?

The eLearning Collaboration will enable Susan to meet her goals by reducing current System obstacles. She won't be required to apply for admission to any of the other NSHE schools after being admitted to Nevada State. She will pay her tuition to Nevada State – her home campus – and will take her online classes on the same learning management system used at all NSHE campuses. In addition, her program of study will be coordinated by an NSC advisor even though courses offered by other NSHE schools may become part of her program of studies. Susan will also be able to rely on student services that are coordinated across NSHE that support her program and recognize that she's attending a variety of schools. All of this will be facilitated by a collaboration amongst advising and student services across NSHE through the Center of Excellence who's role will be to focus on Susan's success.

Lastly, it turns out that though Susan's husband Jim has a good job for now at one of the local resorts, he eventually wants to relocate to northern Nevada and work at a resort there where they also both have family. Additionally, they also have family in Utah, and sometimes consider moving there because the schools in the Utah system are very

competitive. Despite these potential changes, with the proposed NSHE GE Collaboration and its innovative collaboration among NSHE schools providing improved access to classes, scheduling, enrollment, and documentation, Susan is confident that she'll reach her goals, on time, all while remaining within the Nevada System of Higher Education.

The proposed NSHE collaboration can make this scenario a reality for NSHE students at any Nevada institution. Let's make it happen.

e-Ncore Work Group
March 2015

e-Ncore Work Group Report & Recommendations

Report to the NSHE eLearning Taskforce

March 2015

APPENDICES

e-Ncore Work Group Members**

CSN

Terry Norris   Director, Office of E-Learning Co-chair, eNcore Work Group

Dale Warby   CC Professor & Chair, Education Department

GBC

Carrie Bruno   CC Professor, Earth & Physical Sciences

Lisa Frazier   Director, Online Education & Curriculum Development

NSC

Dr. Christopher Harris   Assistant Professor, Communication & Former Faculty Senate Chair

Sam McCool   Instructional Technology Manager

TMCC

Fred Lokken   Dean, WebCollege Division Chair, eNcore Work Group

Crystal Swank   CC Professor, Early Childhood Education

UNLV

Sheila Bock   Assistant Professor, Interdisciplinary Degree Programs

Anne Mendenhall   Director, Online Education

UNR

Shannon Brown   Associate Director, Online Learning

Elena Pravosudova   Lecturer/Vice-Chair, Biology

WNC

Susan Priest   CC Professor Capstone/Student Success & Chair, Faculty Senate

Bob Wynegar   Vice-President, Academic & Student Affairs

**Each e-Learning faculty and administrator Work Group Member was nominated by their institution's President and appointed by Chancellor Klaich.

e-Ncore Working Group Meeting Schedule

Proposed Timeline
March - Summer 2014

1st meeting   Organization of work group/charge

2nd meeting   Master course collaboration - what does it entail? What are our
standards (QM? ADA? Faculty selection & training?) What Gen Ed
"common courses"? (longer meeting)

3rd meeting   What do NSHE campuses currently have in support of master courses in
Gen Ed? What would we need? What would it cost?

4th meeting   Does open source have a role? What can it provide re module?
Presentation from CCCOER (longer meeting) Merlot? Or possibly the new
$57 million initiative for California community colleges? (longer meeting)

5th meeting   Presentation from Pearson (review of several partnerships and
approaches – how do they support master courses? What would it cost?
How would it work? (longer meeting)

6th meeting   Conversation with a representative of a partnership experience (longer
meeting)

7th meeting   Are there other models Work Group members want to look at? - set up
presentation(s)?

8th meeting   Recommendation drafting process

9th meeting   If needed: recommendation drafting process

Phase III Task

10th meeting   Suggested statewide student support services – presentation(s) (longer
meeting)

11th meeting   Possible pathways for organizing a seamless solution for students/identify
issues/obstacles to implementation across NSHE

12th meeting   Present draft business plan including estimated budget and phased
implementation timeline

13th meeting   Recommendation drafting process (this discussion can be extended if time
permits, but this takes us to mid-June which is our anticipated deadline for
completing work)

Additional Meetings to complete drafting of Final Report and Recommendations

October 2014

October 1, 2014
October 3, 2014
October 7, 2014 (2 hour meeting)
October 8, 2014 (2 hour meeting)
December 2, 2014
February 3, 2015
    – meeting with Academic Officers
March 10, 2015

e-Ncore Work Group meeting Ground-rules

- Meet via webinar (each session recorded) (alternative: Video conference)
- Meet (each meeting) as long as we have a quorum of each group (DE
- directors/online faculty)
- Adhere to guiding principles developed by the eLearning Taskforce
- Please let Fred know if you are not able to attend a scheduled meeting
- Spring breaks differ in NSHE but planning to meet weekly until work is completed - likely into the Summer until done. By recording the meetings, we can have work group members absent - but between the recording and the notes, they will stay current with work group activities and can still provide feedback/input
- **Need two smaller groups**: one to develop a draft business plan and another to develop draft seamless pathway(s) for NSHE collaboration (must include a plan for launching in 2015)
- Request: faculty stay with us into the Summer (or can develop ways to ensure input)

I.   The e-Ncore Work Group: Recommendations

The e-Ncore Work Group was created by the eLearning Taskforce and given the responsibility to develop recommendations regarding the specific elements of a General Education Collaboration. The president of each institution nominated a faculty member and eLearning administrator to represent their institution on the Work Group.

The Work Group convened in March 2014 and met from March until December (excluding the summer when faculty were off-contract).   The Work Group brought together the expertise of NSHE's eLearning administrators and experienced eLearning educators.

e-Ncore WORK GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS:

Organization

1.   Proposed NSHE Consortium name: if the proposed collaboration is approved, the name of the NSHE consortium for General Education classes should be determined by system marketing professionals. It is important that the consortium name create no unintended confusion (must be distinct and separate from the individual NSHE institutions).

2.   Proposed Organizational/Administrative Structure: a campus-centric model (decentralized)

   • Collaboration administrator and an Instructional Designer to provide needed coordination. Accountability: reports to the Vice-chancellor for Academic & Student Affairs
   • Creation of a Steering Committee (membership: a faculty representative and DE administrator from each NSHE campus).
   • Creation of a Master Course Review Committee (Membership: Instructional Designer/ representatives from each campus - faculty and instructional designers - that reports to the Steering Committee and assists campuses during the development of collaboration classes.

3.   Intent: collaboration is designed to improve student access to higher education in Nevada, provide relief for students delayed in their pathway for completion, and improve student completion rates.   In addition, position NSHE to respond to increased competition.

4.   Tuition and Fees: as part of the collaboration, each student will identify a "home" institution upon admission. The student will then pay the tuition rate of that institution for any collaboration-related classes.   Each institution will retain the tuition and fees for the classes it teaches/delivers as part of the collaboration.

5.   Special Fees: Do not impose any special fees to help fund the Collaboration at this time.

6. Collaboration Model: the collaboration is modeled after the highly successful Tennessee Board of Regents collaboration (ROCC: Regents Online Campus Collaborative), which was founded in 2001, and to date, has served more than 14,000 online students.

    ROCC Handbook for Students:
    http://www.rodp.org/sites/default/files/ROCC_General_booklett.pdf

    ROCCC Website: www.rodp.org

7. Annually review collaboration-related enrollment and revenue with NSHE academic officers to ensure no adverse impacts to individual campuses

NSHE General Education Course Collaboration

8. General Education Collaboration classes: Twenty-six classes have been identified for inclusion in the General Education collaboration. The courses should be launched in three phases.

    RECOMMENDED e-Ncore GENERAL EDUCATION COLLABORATION MASTER COURSES/PHASING

    A special sub-committee of the e-Ncore Work Group was formed to determine the appropriate data-based strategy for identifying General Education Master Courses for the proposed e-Ncore collaboration. Working with Institutional Research staff at NSHE campuses and the Chancellor's Office, the sub-committee focused on courses that were:
    *   High enrollment and high demand
    *   Needed to complete a degree
    *   Consistent in demonstrating enrollment demand that exceeded course availability at some/all NSHE campuses

    Based on the analysis of data, the General Education sub-committee of the e-Ncore Work Group recommended the following twenty-six classes/phasing sequence:

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
HIST 101	PSC 101	ANTH 101
ENG 101	PSY 101	COM 101
SOC 101	ECON 102	MATH 127
MATH 126	ENV 101	MUS 125
CHEM 121	HIST 102	MATH 181
MUS 121	ENG 102	PHIL 102
	MATH 120	ECON 103
	*ART 160	
*BIO 189/190/191/196/197	*BIO 189/190/191/196/197	*BIO 189/190/191/196/197

9. Module-based course content: Course content should be designed in a module format that is sharable.

10. Master Courses: Utilize Master Courses as the most effective approach in support of an NSHE collaboration of General Education classes. Course content determined by faculty (course content experts).

11. Single LMS: NSHE should adopt Canvas by Instructure as the single Learning Management System for the collaboration. A single LMS will create a consistent learning environment among NSHE institutions and facilitate content design, faculty training, faculty and student technical support, encourage development of NSHE institutional collaboration. The adoption will build on the commitment of five NSHE institutions that have already migrated to Canvas by Instructure.

12. ADA Compliance: A commitment to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance for course design and instructional technology support to ensure access for everyone

13. Content Repository: A course content repository is an essential element of the collaboration and should be adopted in support of the collaboration. The repository should include modules representing relevant NSHE faculty developed content, Open Educational Resources (OER) content, and appropriate Third Party (vendor) content – as determined by faculty (course content experts).

14. Course Standard: all collaboration-related courses will be designed to comply with current NSHE Common Course Numbering guidelines.

15. Quality Matters: NSHE institutions should adopt the Quality Matters National Rubric as part of a comprehensive set of strategies to support the General Education Collaboration.

16. OER Content: the NSHE collaboration should use open-source solutions as an element of the shared course content repository. The Steering Committee will be tasked to work with the Instructional Designer review and affirm appropriate OER content and textbooks.

17. Textbooks: The e-Ncore Work Group endorses efforts to control textbook and related course material costs utilizing one or more of four strategies: 1) developing courses that do not require a textbook (no textbook option), 2) shifting to eTexts or custom eTexts that significantly reduce the cost to students and simply distribution, 3) develop fully open-source supported courses where appropriate, and 4) where faculty agree, adopting a single textbook to reduce student cost.

18. Instructional Designers from the NSHE institutions will create a "collaboration within the collaboration" to share talents and expertise in support of the development of Master General Education classes.

Faculty

19. Faculty Recruitment and Hiring: Each NSHE institution will be responsible for recruiting and hiring faculty to teach in the collaboration.   It is at the discretion of the institution to determine whether or not both full- and part-time faculty will participate, but it is the recommendation of the e-Ncore Work Group that each institution utilize both full and part-time faculty where possible.

20. Faculty Compensation and Workload: each NSHE institution will use its existing compensation and workload policies in support of the collaboration

21. Faculty Training: The NSHE General Education Collaboration will require a minimum program of related training sessions in support of the best practices for teaching online. NSHE institutions will coordinate with the collaboration administrator and Instructional Designer to provide the required initial training as well as recurring/refresher training.

22. Instructional Expectations: The collaboration should establish a minimum set of expectations for faculty teaching collaboration classes. The expectations should reflect the best practices of the Quality Matters rubric.

Student Services

23. Each NSHE institution provides related virtual student services for the NSHE collaboration sections the institution teaches and the students the institution serves. The e-Ncore Steering Committee, along with NSHE student services professionals, will work with each NSHE institution to review student services available and support efforts to make student support seamless across NSHE institutions.

Initial Funding

24. Collaborations such as the proposed NSHE General Education Collaboration are increasingly common nationwide and predecessors have had success securing multiple year grants to help with initial set-up and launch of the statewide collaboration. This option should be pursued to help underwrite the development and launch of the NSHE Collaboration, if approved.

II. e-Ncore Work Group Role and Responsibilities

Please Note: The Chancellor's charge and definition of "e-Ncore" are provided below:

Chancellor's Charge:

Development of an e-Ncore whereby the campuses would develop and deliver e-Ncore master courses for the general education curriculum. The Committee shall develop an education and business model, a program plan, and budget for the implementation of e-Ncore on-line gateway course offerings that will be transferrable to all NSHE institutions. Given the limited human and financial resources of the System and its institutions, it is reasonable to expect that implementation of the full general education curriculum under the e-Ncore is not feasible in the short-term. Therefore, the Committee may develop a phased implementation plan that includes a timeline for implementation across the general education curriculum. The Report should articulate a strategy or rationale for sequencing priorities within the general education curriculum. I am expecting that wherever best from the student perspective the approaches identified by the Committee will build on the considerable excellent work already accomplished in the System. As was noted at the March Board of Regents meeting, NSHE colleges and universities have married the on ground and on campus modes of instruction in response to the changing preferences and demographics of those we serve. Our goal now is to build in ways that extend the benefits of our collective strengths to all of our students where and when they need us.

From: Memorandum from Chancellor Klaich to e-Ncore Work Group members

Definition of e-Ncore:

e-Ncore is an integrated, undergraduate progression of General Education course work offered as an option through online education. It should define a group of courses fundamental to the undergraduate curriculum, regardless of home campus. E-Ncore courses must feature common learning outcomes, but instructional content and materials do not need to be uniform. E-Ncore courses may be developed internally by groups of NSHE faculty working together or courses can be provided by vendors, or a combination of both. E-Ncore does not replace traditional delivery of the general education core but rather provides an option to students who choose to (or need to) complete their general education courses through online media.

From Dr. Richard Katz – Report to NSHE Chancellor and Board of Regents (March 2013)

REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

III. NSHE e-Ncore Consortium

NAME OF NSHE CONSORTIUM: To be determined...

1a. Purpose

Recommendation: Proposed NSHE Consortium name: if the proposed collaboration is approved, the name of the NSHE consortium for General Education classes should be determined by system marketing professionals. It is important that the consortium name create no unintended confusion (must be distinct and separate from the individual NSHE institutions).

The proposed e-Ncore collaboration has been developed in support of pertinent recommendations of The Katz Report (E-Learning and Higher Education's Iron Triangle: Opportunity, Affordability, and Student Success at NSHE, February 11, 2013). This report outlines the role and value of a series of commitments within NSHE to improve collaboration in online instruction and to better position NSHE to increased external competition.

Specifically, the proposed e-Ncore collaboration in NSHE in crafted in support of the following recommendations included in The Katz Report:

- Recommendation #1: Invest in Quality Matters and Other QA Tools and Techniques
  - builds upon existing NSHE QM consortium
- Recommendation #2: Invest in Learning Management System (LMS) Harmonization
  - builds upon existing Canvas LMS consortium
- Recommendation #3: Invest in Distance Education and Related Policy Review
  - ENcore model is designed to support greater entrepreneurial initiatives and builds upon NSHE progressive commitment to online instruction
- Recommendation #4: Invest in Learning Analytics
  - a key element of a shared LMS solution
- Recommendation #6: Invest in a Shared Student Learning Portal and Student e-Portfolio
  - e-Portfolio part of shared LMS solution/all campuses using Peoplesoft SIS
- Recommendation #7: Develop an NSHE-wide Shared Student Services Strategy
  - builds upon Shared Services commitment within NSHE
- Recommendation #8: Invest in a Database of Effective Practices in E-Learning and in an E-Learning R&D Capability
  - Professional Development strategies, commitment to recognized Best Practices
- Recommendation #11: Invest in Shared Marketing –
  - joint ENcore marketing

-
  Recommendation #13: Invest in a Repository of Learning Objects
  - Instructure/Canvas repository of NSHE faculty, open source and third-party content modules designed to meet ENcore standards and NSHE common course numbering and assessment requirements
- Recommendation #14: Develop e-Ncore
  - key recommendation of this report
- Recommendation #15: Create Centers of e-Learning Excellence to Support e- Ncore
  - NSHE-wide steering committee, dedicated ENcore coordinator/instructional design and coordinated Professional Development as well as an annual ENcore collaboration conference
- Recommendation #16: Hire an E-learning Program Officer and Create an Influential Governance
  - Included in ENcore organization

2a. Mission Statement

e-Ncore is a centrally coordinated NSHE unit that serves students enrolled in Nevada public higher education by coordinating, managing, supporting and marketing a catalog of master general education courses. e-Ncore, as described in its business plan, will foster
a system-wide initiative to promote shared capabilities that builds upon the best professional efforts of NSHE faculty, instructional designers, and development professionals across the system. e-Ncore guiding principles are:

1. Empowered to advocate for and manage funding for design, development and rating of the best courses available from local campuses within the system.
2. To respect campus autonomy and student choice while providing access to a system catalog and access to local campus alternatives.
3. To coordinate identified student services with local campuses in support of student success and progress to a degree within the system.
4. To protect and preserve faculty intellectual property and course development and facilitate compensation for work and ensuing intellectual property vested in NSHE.
5. To promote and coordinate the application of system adopted standards for course design, online teaching practice, and certification of standards compliance.

3a. Organization (how governed)

The e-Ncore Work Group embraces several of The Katz Report recommendations that provide for improved communication, cooperation, and collaboration.

The recommended structure identifies a collaboration administrator attached to the NSHE System office.   The administrator would report to the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Student Services. The administrator would be responsible for the coordination of needed professional development training and would foster collaboration opportunities amongst e-Learning administrators, instructional designers, faculty and student services professionals.   The administrator would also serve as a liaison connecting the Board of Regents and Chancellor and key administrators at each campus, to the e-Ncore collaboration. This model would allow for centralized coordination but recognizes what each NSHE institution has to offer in support of the

overall objective of improving the quality and consistency of online instruction and promoting improved access, retention and success for our students through collaboration.

An instructional designer would also be attached to this office in support of all seven NSHE institutions. This would maximize the talent at each of the campuses yet allow for greater coordination and collaboration in course design and content development. The Work Group recognizes the need for additional Instructional Designers to support critical course design and development at the seven NSHE institutions. Smaller institutions with fewer staff otherwise could be disadvantaged and unable to participate equally with larger institutions.

Finally, this organizational design includes the creation of a standing Steering Committee of eLearning administrators and teaching faculty from each of the NSHE institutions. This reflects the design of the current e-Ncore Work Group which has demonstrated during its existence the many advantages of this approach to collaboration and problem-solving.   The Steering Committee would work with the administrator to further refine policies, practices and best practices for the e-Ncore collaboration. This approach also ensures institution-level communication to, and engagement of, key institution stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION: Proposed e-Ncore Collaboration Organization
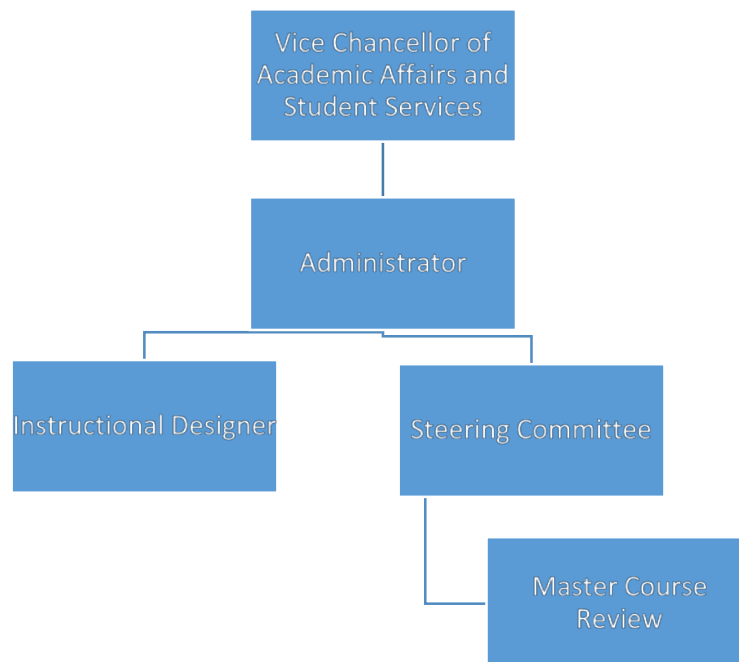
RECOMMENDATION: Proposed Organizational/Administrative Structure: a campus-centric model
(decentralized)

- Collaboration administrator and an Instructional Designer to provide needed coordination. Accountability: reports to the Vice-chancellor for Academic & Student Affairs
- Creation of a Steering Committee (membership: a faculty representative and DE administrator from each NSHE campus).
- Creation of a Master Course Review Committee (Membership: Instructional Designer/ representatives from each campus - faculty and instructional designers - that reports to the Steering Committee and assists campuses during the development of collaboration classes.

2b. Marketing

The effective marketing of e-Ncore to NSHE students as well as a commitment to broaden marketing of NSHE online courses and degrees beyond Nevada's borders are essential to the collaboration's success. From the outset, it is important to craft a marketing plan that reaches out to existing NSHE students stymied in their education pathway by a shortage of "high demand" General Education courses as well as new constituencies of students.   The intent of this new collaboration is NOT to foster competition between or amongst NSHE institutions. Rather, the new collaboration offers the opportunity to better serve existing NSHE students and create new student cohort opportunities. In this way, NSHE institutions can respond appropriately to increasing external competition and begin to effectively compete in the rapidly changing higher education marketplace.   Nevadans – and the Nevada economy - will also benefit from a more collaborative NSHE with greater online class and degree choice.

A variety of marketing strategies can be utilized including:

1. Each institution including the marketing of e-Ncore classes as part of its overall marketing plan
2. System-level marketing to assist in increasing awareness and helping to solidify the branding of e-Ncore within Nevada
3. Building on the launch of the State Authorization and Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) to market NSHE online classes and degrees beyond Nevada's borders

One of The Katz Report Recommendations is the development of a student portal to e-Ncore.   This can be an effective way to answer initial questions and foster contacts with prospective students.   It is imperative to develop as seamless a solution for NSHE students with a focus on the courses available, not the institution.   The website can serve as a landing page for student exploration and discovery of shared General Education options that are in high demand within NSHE.   It will be important to determine the relationship of "home" campus and NSHE collaboration websites; that task will be given to the Steering Committee of the new collaboration to refine.

All institutions need to be reminded that higher education in Nevada is poised for significant growth as the Great Recession ends and as the state continues to be successful at economic growth and diversification. For Nevada residents, as well as for those who will relocate to Nevada in search of employment and a fresh-start, NSHE will serve as a gateway to greater success and prosperity. As NSHE builds its new collaboration, is it is an opportunity to re-examine the "opportunities missed" in marketing to new categories of students. A detailed marketing plan for promoting e-Ncore should include:

- Helping NSHE students who are on a pathway to completion but delayed by a lack of available General Education course options.
- Active Adult Learners
- Active Duty Military and Veterans
  A reinvigorated strategy of building a bridge to Nevada's K-12 students
- The development of tailored marketing materials including a dedicated class schedule for the NSHE consortium
- Direct engagement and support of Nevada's business community (targeted degrees and classes, industry-standard certificates, contract training, internships)
- Statewide strategies for degree delivery and coordination
- State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) which opens the door to the marketing of NSHE institution classes and degrees beyond Nevada's borders

RECOMMENDATION: adopt a comprehensive marketing plan designed to grow NSHE collaborations, provide increased higher education choices for Nevadans, and effectively compete with external higher education providers.

3c. Finances of consortium including staffing and budgeting

Based on the e-Ncore organizational structure recommendation, initial or start-up funding is outlined in the proposed two-year budget for the collaboration. This approach establishes an initial funding level for the collaboration and challenges the new collaboration to identify additional funding needed as well as possible funding solutions to meet the identified needs. This approach also capitalizes on existing NSHE structures (such as System Computing Services (SCS) to provide related technical assistance with PeopleSoft and website design/maintenance. Specific features of the budget proposal include:

- Administrator for the Collaboration. The position will provide needed leadership and coordination, planning and communication, and organizational support for the Collaboration start-up and operation.
- Instructional Designer. The position will provide needed support and coordination for the development of initial master courses and will provide the needed practices needed to ensure curriculum meets the agreed to expectations and standards. The Instructional Designer will oversee the establishment of the e-Ncore content repository and will work with the e-Ncore administrator and Steering Committee to identify an appropriate Professional Development schedule of trainings. Where possible, the Instructional Designer will utilize existing talent at NSHE institutions, tap into national webinars of relevance and both promote/monitor agreed to best practices.

- Funding to support an annual e-Ncore Professional Development conference for faculty, instructional designers and administrators
- Seed funding for intra-NSHE marketing as well as statewide marketing of the collaboration
- Initial operating funds to support the development and implementation of the collaboration
- A commitment to fully identify funding and staffing needed to fully launch the collaboration as well as possible funding solutions. Long-term funding for related licensing and support will also be identified.

Proposed Budget: NSHE e-Ncore   Collaboration

	Year 1	Year 2
Staff*		
o Director/benefits	$130,000	$132,000
o Administrative Support	----------------------	----------------------
o Instructional Designer/ benefits	$90,000	$91,000
Operating		
o Supplies	$10,000	$10,000
o Equipment (computer/printer)	$5,000	$2,000
o Travel	$10,000	$10,000
Professional Development o		
Annual NSHE ENCORE Conference	$25,000	$25,000
Curriculum Development	$35,000	$35,000
o Master course stipends	$10,000	$10,000
o QM stipends		
Marketing	$50,000	$50,000
Developer position	----------------------	----------------------
Student Services (Licensing)	$10,000	$10,000
Third Party Contracting	----------------------	----------------------
	$375,000	$375,000

* Assumption: position housed in Chancellor's office – basic office set-up provided and initial administrative support provided by existing staff

3d. Leadership

Effective leadership is essential to the success of the e-Ncore Collaboration.   The e-Ncore Work Group reviewed, discussed and rejected the idea of creating one or more Centers for Excellence. The major concern was that unless managed appropriately, it would have the potential of leaving other NSHE campuses behind. The collective desire is to build on what NSHE campuses have already accomplished rather than commit to the creation of decidedly new – and untested – mechanisms for support.

The result is the Work Group endorsement of a centralized leadership position that would be housed at the System Office, would report to the Vice-chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, and would play the critical role in the following:

- the refinement of the collaboration
- serve as the communications officer to promote understanding and broad-based full-spectrum buy-in from the individual campus to the Board of Regents
- chief implementation officer
- consortium manager
- planning officer
- tasked with determining the best methods for short-, medium-, and long-term sustainability of the consortium

e-Ncore Administrator Position

The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) will hire a full-time Administrator of e-Ncore who will have full responsibility to implement the e-Ncore Plan. The e-Ncore administrator will report to the Vice-Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs. A position description will be developed by the NSHE eLearning Taskforce.

e-Ncore Steering Committee

To support the e-Ncore administrator, an NSHE e-Ncore Steering Committee will be created. The Steering Committee will consist of the seven DE administrators from each NSHE institution (for WNC, the President will designate an administrative representative). In addition, each institution's Faculty Senate will also nominate a faculty representative – approved by that institution's President - to serve on the committee. Faculty selected will have a minimum of three years of online teaching experience in NSHE.   The faculty member will serve a three-year term on the committee and receive a six-credit work-load

reassignment from their instructional teaching assignment.   The e-Ncore Steering Committee will work with the e-Ncore administrator and Instructional Designer to refine the following:

Course:

- Course identification (as the collaboration grows)
- Criteria for Master Courses
- Quality Matters review and certification
- Development of a shared repository of course content
- Confirmation of the readiness of individual course content modules, regular review and updating of course content modules

Marketing:

- Development of the Marketing plan
- Development of the ENcore Student Portal (landing page for consortium)
- PeopleSoft interface to improve seamless offering of ENcore classes at all NSHE institutions
- Dedicated course catalog and marketing materials

Planning & Services:

- Development of a 3-year plan for e-Ncore
- Review and coordination of related student Services
- Exploration and possible implementation of emerging technology and software solutions

Center of Excellence

This idea was included – and advocated for- in The Katz Report. The proposed Center of Excellence would coordinate NSHE-wide training and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.   The center could be patterned after a successful model utilized in the State University of New York (SUNY) System. The approach includes engaging each of the institutions to create a statewide solution for curriculum development and quality, faculty training, pedagogy and fostering interest in and support for increased collaborations.

RECOMMENDATION: This approach was advocated for in the Katz Report. The e-Ncore administrator and Steering Committee would be tasked to explore further the idea including the possibility of multiple centers each focusing on an element of the collaboration.

IV. GENERAL EDUCATION CLASS RECOMMENDATIONS AND RELATED INSTRUCTIONAL ELEMENTS

4. e-Ncore

4 a. Selection Process and Criteria

A special General Education Committee of the e-Ncore Work Group was formed to determine data gathering needs and to coordinate with each campus (and data warehousing) to produce collated data. Course identification and selection was based on this collated data and confirmed that the recommended master courses were:

- High demand
- Needed to complete a degree
- Demonstrated demand exceeding course availability at some/all campuses

4b. Recommended Master Courses

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
HIST 101	PSC 101	ANTH 101
ENG 101	PSY 101	COM 101
SOC 101	ECON 102	MATH 127
MATH 126	ENV 101	MUS 125
CHEM 121	HIST 102	MATH 181
MUS 121	ENG 102	PHIL 102
	MATH 120	ECON 103
	*ART 160	
*BIO 189/190/191/196/197	*BIO 189/190/191/196/197	*BIO 189/190/191/196/197

*Developed based on concepts or possibly manifests as smaller modules

The content for the courses should be developed in modules to provide each institution the ability to select course content based on individual campus needs. For the Art and Biology courses indicated by an asterisk it is recommended to not develop master courses but to develop modules based on concepts that could be used across the various Biology and Art courses. This is due to the variability in instructional needs and offerings.

RECOMMENDATION: Course content should be developed as modules

4c. Phased Approach

The General Education Committee recommends taking a multi-year phased approach to developing and offering the recommended master courses. The multi-year phase approach will allow the system to gauge institutional resources and build capacity in order to successfully develop outstanding master courses. The purpose of dividing course development into phases is to allow time for the following strategies:

1. introduce a shareable course design and development process

2. start with a limited number of courses from across the humanities, social sciences and physical sciences around which faculty across the system could collaborate

3. expand the number of master courses in subsequent phases that would serve individual campuses as well as the system.

The sense of the committee was to foster collaboration across the system by starting slowly and focusing on a limited number of courses.

RECOMMENDATION: The e-Ncore set of classes should be developed and offered in a phased launch.

5. Curriculum Development Plan

5a. Master Courses Approach

Master courses have emerged as an accepted standard for online instruction. National organizations like Quality Matters have encouraged this approach as a way to address course quality, consistency, assessment and retention needs.

This approach has been advocated at the individual campus level, but challenges would certainly present themselves at a consortium or system-level.   However, NSHE does have a few advantages in launching Master Courses approach:

- Only two Learning Management System platforms in NSHE:
  Instructure Canvas (CSN, GBC, NSC, TMCC and WNC consortium) and Blackboard (UNLV and UNR)
- A shared commitment to the Quality Matters National Rubric – NSHE campuses are in the process of creating a consortium to collaborate and to reduce costs
- Greater coordination in the adoption and licensing of Student Support solutions (e.g. Smarthinking, ProctorU, TurnItIn)
- A statewide Distance Education Directors council that has been in existence since 1997
- A smaller, less complex system that includes common course numbering and coordinated articulation/transfer

To be successful, any commitment to a Master Courses solution for an e-Ncore collaboration would necessitate: coordination of professional development programs, coordinated course design objectives at the individual campus level, greater communication and interaction amongst administrators, staff professionals (instructional designers) and faculty, as well as improved efforts to better coordinate for software licensing acquisition (including planning).

Master Course Review and Certification

NSHE institutions already offer all the classes identified in the General Education Phased List online.   In fact, there is rather substantial duplication of the identified courses within NSHE. It would be very appropriate to begin with an initial review of courses already developed to determine to what extent, any/all meet the expectations of Quality Matters certification, module design and best practices. The Steering Committee could begin with this initial review, and at the very least, either validate their readiness OR identify areas needing improvement. This initial review could/would produce some of the first modules for the shared repository.

As new courses on the General Education Phased List are identified, they would be processed for review by the Steering Committee working with the Instructional Designer, the Instructional Designer Team from the NSHE institutions, NSHE faculty content experts, and the e-Ncore administrator. Course content would be required to be:

• Modular in design
• Quality Matters reviewed/certified
• Compliant with the agreed to best practices/standards established for e-Ncore classes
• Compliant with course assessment standards developed for ENcore classes

The advantages of an agreed to Master Course approach would be of great benefit to our end-users, students.   It would enhance efforts to offer a seamless collaboration in support of greater student access and success.   Any solutions short of this would likely be more cumbersome and confusing and would lead to inevitable frustration.

RECOMMENDATION: Master Courses: Utilize Master Courses as the most effective approach in support of an NSHE collaboration of General Education classes. Course content determined by faculty (course content experts).

5b. Single LMS?

The e-Ncore Work Group reviewed the range of options for platform support (Learning Management System) for e-Ncore General Education courses. Each campus has essentially gone through its own process for review and selection, faculty have been actively engaged in the decision and the selection ahs been made relevant to what is in the best interests of the students and faculty of that institution. Given this reality, there are essentially four options to consider:

1. Each NSHE campus continues to use the LMS it has adopted – in other words, offer a blend of Canvas by Instructure (used by the four community colleges and Nevada State College) and Blackboard Learn (used by both UNR and UNLV).   Although somewhat politically expedient, there are several serious disadvantages to doing so including:
    *   complicates tech support for both faculty and students
    *   abandons the principle of "seamlessness" for students and faculty
    *   makes training more challenging (no single platform)

2. The e-Ncore General Education consortium adopts another unique LMS - this is the least logical option as it diminishes the advantage of familiarity with either Canvas by Instructure or Blackboard Learn

3. Create a dynamic where there are two sub-consortia for NSHE – one built around each adopted LMS (Consortium #1: CSN, GBC, NSC, TMCC and WNC) and Consortium #2: UNLV and UNR) – this of course defeats the goal of a system-wide collaboration and likely eliminates any evolution in collaboration for NSHE

4. Choose one LMS already in use in NSHE – and commit to it. The Work Group examined this option and found the endorsement of Canvas by Instructure had key advantages over Blackboard Learn. Specifically:
    *   The current Canvas by Instructure consortium offers the majority of online courses and serves by far the largest number of NSHE students
    *   This consortium also has recently recruited the Elko and Clark County School Districts to use Canvas by Instructure as well – offering a K-12 bridge of seamless online instruction using the same LMS
    *   Canvas by Instructure has launched a new course repository that would serve the NSHE consortium well
    *   Canvas by Instructure is cloud-based and more affordable as a collaboration solution
    *   Canvas by Instructure is used heavily by Western States (Utah, California, Washington State) which provides a marketing advantage in attracting out-of-state students to Nevada institutions

However, both UNLV and UNR have a long-standing relationship with Blackboard Learn and may be reluctant to switch.   More discussion likely is needed and should Involve key administrators from the institutions as well as the Chancellor's Office.

RECOMMENDATION: NSHE should adopt Canvas by Instructure as the single Learning Management System for the e-Ncore Collaboration. A single LMS will create a consistent learning environment among NSHE institutions and facilitate content design, faculty training, faculty and student technical support, encourage development of a shared content repository and represents the next logical step for increasing NSHE institutional collaboration.   The adoption will build on the commitment of five NSHE institutions that have already migrated to Canvas by Instructure.

5c. Module design for content

This approach to content design is consistent with the platform design of most contemporary Learning Management Systems. Canvas by Instructure embraces this approach that in turn has influenced course design at five NSHE institutions. The latest versions of Blackboard Learn also focus on module design. In addition, the community colleges involved in the TAACCCT3 grant – Great Basin College, Truckee Meadows Community College and Western Nevada College - have been tasked with the development of module content for all curricula to be delivered online. This has fostered a new level of collaboration amongst the grant-based instructional designers to develop course content in this format.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop course content based on a module design to facilitate content sharing and to broaden the potential sources for content used by faculty.

5d. ADA compliance

This type of compliance is the law, but NSHE institutional enforcement does vary. The Work Group members endorse a good-faith effort to comply to ensure all will have access to the e-Ncore offerings. ADA compliance is supported by LMS adoption, Quality Matters course review and certification, the use of ADA-compliant video and course content, and the provision of ADA-compliant student services.

RECOMMENDATION: ADA Compliance: A commitment to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance for course design and instructional technology support to ensure access for everyone

5e. Central Repository

The adoption and development of a shared content repository is of critical importance to the success of the e-Ncore General Education Collaboration. The repository ensures that NSHE faculty will have the broadest possible options in developing their courses. Faculty will be able to choose from one, two or all three repository sources:

- NSHE faculty-developed content modules
- Open Educational Resources (OER) – developed content modules, and/or
- Third Party (vendor) content modules

Ultimately, as the repository expands and the choices available to faculty increase, it will both facilitate and accelerate the development of master courses in support of the NSHE General Education Collaboration. Those NSHE institutions that adopted Canvas by Instructure are currently exploring the new Canvas course content repository (available for testing in Fall 2014).

RECOMMENDATION: A course content repository is an essential element of the collaboration and should be adopted in support of e-Ncore. The repository should include modules representing relevant NSHE faculty developed content and Open Educational Resources (OER) content, and may include appropriate Third Party (vendor) content.

5f. NSHE developed and/or 3rd party?

To be honest, this particular recommendation from The Katz Report has generated more concern from NSHE faculty than any other. Based on the consultant's recommendations for other state systems, the concern focused on the possible eventual out-sourcing of course content development – and even instruction to Third Party partners. The Chancellor has repeatedly asked that this not be seen as a threat but rather as an option worthy of further exploration. The Work Group took the Chancellor's request seriously and discussed the way in which Third Party partners might best serve the goals of the e-Ncore General Education Collaboration.

Several factors were considered during this Work Group review and assessment. Key issues included:
- The consultant's recognition of NSHE campus success in the development and expansion of online course and degree offerings
- The Chancellor's desire to be willing to consider Third Party Partnerships as a viable option/to have some role in the NSHE General Education Collaboration
- The trials and tribulations of various Third Party partnerships/ventures in other states where the initial Third Party role was significantly renegotiated (e.g. University of Texas System & the more recent California State University System)
- The practice at all NSHE institutions to use some degree of Third Party content for online course offerings based on faculty preference
- Institutional experience in working with Third Party vendors – and the sometimes significant failure of vendors to provide acceptable levels of service and/or to keep promises made to faculty

The e-Ncore Work Group faculty and administrators view the current success of online classes and degrees at NSHE institutions to be evidence of our ability to meet the new challenges and to expand our abilities to collaborate.   To date, Third Party partners have been recognized for their ability to assist in the development of course content and to provide workable solutions for related course materials. These are the strengths – where thoroughly vetted – that Third Party partners can bring to the e-Ncore General Education Collaboration. As The Katz Report has recognized, however, NSHE institutions have also demonstrated a tenacity for growing online enrollments, improving course quality and learning to work more closely together.   NSHE can and should capitalize on its success, but certainly it should also leave the door open to exploring any opportunity that can improve student access, success and completion.

RECOMMENDATION: the NSHE General Education Collaboration may include the use of appropriate Third Party (vendor) content. The Steering Committee – working   with the e-Ncore administrator, Instructional Designer and NSHE faculty content experts - will be charged with the review and identification of vendor(s) and module-based content. Any Third Party content will need to meet the same criteria/standards as NSHE faculty-developed content and Open Education Resource (OER) developed content.

5g. Quality Matters Review & Certification

The Quality Matters (QM) National Rubric and Course Certification Process has been adopted by five of NSHE's campuses, and is under consideration at the two universities. The five campuses have already individually committed to QM course review and certification with several of the campuses (CSN, GBC and WNC) showing real leadership in advancing the certification of its faculty to be able to internally (within Nevada) review and certify courses.   The campuses have committed to forming an NSHE Quality Matters consortium in a shared endorsement of the QM experience and also anticipate a significant savings in the cost of conducting course peer reviews as well as related training. Each campus conducted its own internal review process and adopted the Quality Matters rubric as the preferred solution.

The true advantages for jointly adopting a solution like the Quality Matters Rubric are clear; to provide a nationally recognized set of standards to and from which we can establish procedures and feedback data for evaluating and indexing sharable content resources, course content, objectives, assessment, design, accessibility and usability.

To ensure faculty engagement various incentives should be identified that will encourage faculty to become certified reviewers as well as to be engaged participants in the specific course review and certification process.

RECOMMENDATION: NSHE institutions should adopt the Quality Matters National Rubric as part of a comprehensive set of strategies to support an e-Ncore General Education Collaboration.

5h. Role of open-source solutions?

The Open Educational Resource (OER) movement has been gaining momentum in recent years in higher education. The primary motivation for the adoption of Open Educational content is the ability to significantly reduce course material costs for students. In addition, it reflects a more altruistic movement amongst educators to share content and materials.

The interest in the exploration and possible adoption of open-source solutions for textbooks, course materials, and course content is apparent at NSHE's institutions. Clearly, the overall quality of OER solutions has improved significantly given the success of both national international OER movements. The 1st Annual Nevada Digital Conference in April 2014 – which included attendees from every NSHE institution - featured Cable Green of Creative Commons as a keynote speaker. In his speech, he documented progress made in the OER movement and outlined advantages for adopting OER solutions. In addition, the TAACCCT grants awarded to NSHE community colleges require the use of OER assets in the development of sharable course content.

During the e-Ncore Work Group review of OER options, the Work Group received a presentation from representatives of the CCCOER. In addition, the repository approach used by Merlot was reviewed as a logical partner for providing additional

module and content options for the e-Ncore General Education set of classes. It is apparent that the e-Ncore collaboration has the opportunity to provide leadership – and possibly incentives – to more fully explore the advantages of adopting OER materials at all NSHE institutions.

That said, there are legitimate concerns about the level of maturity the OER movement has attained. Openly developed materials can be uneven in quality; this confirms the importance of identifying appropriate OER partnerships with organizations like Merlot, CCCOER and the Creative Commons movement.

RECOMMENDATION: the e-Ncore Work Group endorses the use of open-source solutions as an element of the shared course content repository and also encourages consideration of appropriate OER solutions in support of the e-Ncore General Education Consortium. The Steering Committee will be tasked to work with the Instructional Designer and NSHE faculty to review and affirm appropriate OER content and textbooks.

5i. Common textbook for each course?

The logic behind even asking this question is rooted in a strong desire to manage and where possible, to reduce, the cost of textbooks and related course materials for students. This approach would also greatly simplify the coordination required to ensure that the e-Ncore course textbooks and materials are available at all NSHE campus bookstores.

There are concerns in requiring a particular text however. NSHE institutions traditionally have viewed this as a faculty decision. On the other hand, the Board of Regents has clearly indicated the need for all NSHE institutions to find ways to reduce textbook costs for students. Nationally, the textbook issue has reached a critical point. Data indicates that due to rapidly increasing textbook costs, only six out of ten students now buy or rent the textbook for their class (and data further suggests it is now more likely four out of ten students that actually have a textbook).

There are several possible solutions available to controlling – and reducing – the cost of textbooks and related materials that would serve the interests of both students and the e-Ncore General Education Collaboration:
• Develop course content to be textbook agnostic (not tied to a particular textbook)
• Adopt eTexts to facilitate distribution and reduce cost
• Develop more affordable custom eTexts that feature both publisher and "home- grown" content
• Fully embrace open-source textbook solutions
• Develop courses in a way that does not require the use of a textbook

The discussion amongst e-Ncore Work Group members mirrored what has occurred at every NSHE campus. There is currently no consensus of how to balance the seemingly opposing objectives of appropriate curriculum support with increasing need for cost control. The creation of the e-Ncore General Education Consortium offers an opportunity for directed exploration and leadership in this area.

RECOMMENDATION: The e-Ncore Work Group endorses efforts to control textbook and related course material costs utilizing one or more of four strategies: 1) developing courses that do not require a textbook (no textbook option), 2) shifting to eTexts or custom eTexts that significantly reduce the cost to students and simply distribution, 3) develop fully open-source supported courses where appropriate, and 4) where faculty agree, adopting a single textbook to reduce student cost.

5j. How supported (engage instructional designers from NSHE campuses)?

The Katz Report recognized the significant progress NSHE institutions have made in the area of online education. Each NSHE campus has developed a self-sustaining model of staffing and course development/support but in addition, NSHE campuses have a strong and long tradition of cooperation, coordination and collaboration in the area of eLearning. Specific evidence of this includes:

- Administrators have met on a regular basis (several times a year) since 1997
- Institutions regularly collaborate with grants (e.g. TAACCCT 1-4) sharing instructional design and course development including sharable content
- All NSHE institutions participated in a single student portal approach to promote online classes and degrees from 2002 to 2009
- Collaborations have been established with Canvas by Instructure (five campuses), Smarthinking 24/7 Tutoring (four campuses), ProctorU (three campuses), Evaluation Kit (four campuses), and Quality Matters National Rubric (five campuses)

The proposed governance model for the e-Ncore General Education Collaboration includes the hiring of an Instructional Designer – attached to the collaboration administrator and the NSHE System Office – who would in turn work with the Instructional Designers at all seven NSHE institutions. This "collaboration within a collaboration" builds on the experience and strengths of Instructional Designers already in place at most NSHE campuses but adds more coordination and sharing where needed. This is the ideal model to promote collaboration in the development of Master Courses for the e-Ncore General Education Collaboration.

All members of the e-Ncore Work Group recognized the longer term need to identify resources to increase the number of Instructional Designers at each campus – via a grant or dedicated revenue stream. Instructional Designers will carry the major responsibilities of the collaboration and work closely with collaboration faculty. As currently proposed, the Instructional Designer attached to the System Office will regularly work with individual NSHE campuses and will be required to schedule time to be at each campus to work with faculty individually where needed. This can serve as an initial, short-term solution but additional Instructional Designers – ideally to be assigned to each campus – will be needed as the system-wide collaboration grows

RECOMMENDATION: Instructional Designers from the NSHE institutions will create a "collaboration within the collaboration" to share talents and expertise in support of the development of Master General Education classes.

6. Faculty Selection

6a. Full-time and/or Part-time Faculty?

NSHE institutions have outstanding full-time and part-time faculty currently teaching online classes. The proposed e-Ncore General Education Collaboration will have the opportunity to draw from this pool of online faculty to assist in the development and instructional delivery of the Master Courses.

In general, NSHE institutions rely on full-time faculty for course development. It is assumed that this will be the normal practice for Master Course development as well. The current set of initial General Education course offerings can draw from relevant full-time faculty pools at all NSHE institutions.

As concerns instructional delivery, it is anticipated that both qualified full-time and part-time faculty will be eligible to teach sections of the developed Master Courses, but we recognize that this is ultimately a decision to be made by each institution. It is imperative that the very best NSHE has to offer be recruited to teach in the collaboration. The focus is necessarily on the success of the student and ensuring the best are teaching will greatly increase student success – and the ultimate success of the collaboration.

RECOMMENDATION: Faculty Recruitment and Hiring: Each NSHE institution will be responsible for recruiting and hiring faculty to teach in the collaboration.   It is at the discretion of the institution to determine whether or not both full- and part-time faculty will participate, but it is the recommendation of the e-Ncore Work Group that each institution utilize both full and part-time faculty where possible.

6b. The Criteria for selection? How recruited?

The e-Ncore Work Group hopes to attract the very best faculty from within NSHE to participate in the Collaboration.   It is imperative that each NSHE institution take steps to recognize faculty who participate. The Collaboration opens the door to greater visibility for NSHE statewide, regionally and nationally. As discussed later in this section, faculty interested in teaching e-Ncore General Education Consortium Master Courses must meet the minimum criteria for selection:
- Recommended by their institution
- Minimum of three years of online teaching experience
- Minimum of six hours of Learning Management System/pedagogy of online teaching/how to support online students training
- Minimum of first tier of Quality Matters training

Faculty will be recruited from each NSHE institution and assigned once they have completed all mandatory trainings and are found to be in compliance with any additional criteria identified by the NSHE VPAAs (e.g. workload considerations, performance standards, etc.)

RECOMMENDATION: NSHE should set the bar high for the recruitment of faculty to teach for the e-Ncore General Education Consortium and should recognize and reward faculty that do participate.

6c. Faculty training needed? Who does it?

Best practices for teaching online emphasize the importance of mandatory comprehensive training as well as regular recurring/refresher training. The Collaboration will require as a condition of hire that the initial training outlined below be completed:

- Beginning/Intermediary training for the Learning Management System
- Training regarding the pedagogy of teaching an online class
- Training regarding the faculty role in student retention and success
- First-tier Quality Matters training

The Steering Committee, working with the administrator and the Instructional Designer, will develop a Professional Development program in support of initial mandatory trainings as well as regular recurring/refresher trainings. The Instructional Designer will have responsibility for implementing the training program working with each of NSHE institutions. In a climate of collaboration, NSHE institutions will help each other to ensure that the training provided is consistent and of a high quality.

RECOMMENDATION: The e-Ncore General Education Collaboration will require a minimum program of related training sessions in support of the best practices for teaching online. NSHE institutions will coordinate with the administrator and the Instructional Designer to provide the required initial training as well as recurring/refresher training and informational webinars

d. Expectations for teaching online (response times, communication, etc.)

The e-Ncore General Education Collaboration will function under an agreed to set of minimum expectations for faculty and students.   The specific set of minimum expectations for faculty and students will be developed by the Steering Committee, administrator and Instructional Designer.   Essentially, expectations and standards in place at NSHE institutions for online learning will be adopted for the Collaboration. Specific examples of expectations include:

- Expectations included in the Quality Matters rubric
- An agreed to number of times a faculty member will check into class and an agreed to number of times for a student to check into the class
- An agreed to time frame for responding to student questions
- An agreed to time frame for grading assignments
- Commitment to utilize early alert and student activity tracking to identify students who are falling behind or failing
- Clear communication regarding when the faculty member is available and how the faculty member can be reached (e.g. phone number, email, etc.)

Based on what we've learned from other system collaborations in other states, there are several key elements that can increase success: schools with the most successful online programs participate in a sustainable state-wide consortium that focuses on the development/adoption of standards and stress student success/demonstrable outcomes for both students and local business communities.

RECOMMENDATION: Instructional Expectations: The collaboration should establish a minimum set of expectations for faculty teaching collaboration classes. The expectations should reflect the best practices of the Quality Matters rubric.

6e. Compensation?

Faculty compensation is a significant issue since it could be a deciding factor in attracting the very best faculty from within NSHE. On the other hand, if it is perceived as too generous, you could prove to be disruptive on individual campuses or could foster the perception of "have v. have-not" amongst faculty at different institutions. The e-Ncore Work Group does not have the expertise to determine the appropriate level of compensation. As part of its due diligence, the Work Group members reviewed what is currently the practice at each of the NSHE institutions. Universities compensate at a rate that is higher than does the state college or community colleges. It is also apparent that Summer Schools – as a non state-funded activity – operate with differentiated pay rates as well.

Currently, campuses are not synchronized in compensating for either traditional or online teaching. Based on current practice, it could be appropriate to allow a full-time faculty member to either count teaching a Collaboration Master Course as part of regular load or compensate as an overload consistent with that institution's policies and practices. For part-time faculty colleagues, each institution could compensate at the rate in place at that institution. Alternatively, the Collaboration could have its own set rate for compensation – that would have to be reviewed and agreed to by the NSHE VPAAs.

The e-Ncore Work Group identified several guiding principles that will provide a sound foundation for the Collaboration. Providing selected faculty incentives, which is already a practice at NSHE institutions, will facilitate curriculum review and development as well as instruction. Possible incentives (stipends) include:

- Master Course review and development
- Serving as a course coordinator (course group administration)
- Quality Matters review (course review/faculty and peer review)
- Course monitoring (serve as an observer)
- Faculty mentoring
- Special assignments (tasked by the Steering Committee to ensure faculty input and involvement)

RECOMMENDATION: Faculty Compensation and Workload: each NSHE institution will use its existing compensation and workload policies in support of the collaboration

6f. Course Standards

It is an assumption of the Work Group that a review of existing objectives and outcomes developed individually by each NSHE institution for each of the identified Master Courses already falls within the "80%" rule of common course numbering for content.

RECOMMENDATION: Course Standard: all collaboration-related courses will be designed to comply with current NSHE Common Course Numbering guidelines

7. Tuition/Fees

7a. Special Collaboration rate distinct from any campus tuition rate?

As with the previous topic discussions, NSHE institutions have options regarding how to proceed regarding tuition and textbooks. Logically, doing what each institution already does in setting its tuition and fee rates is the clearest and most appropriate approach. This is consistent with the "Home" institution model utilized by many of the state consortia the Work Group reviewed.

RECOMMENDATION: Tuition and Fees: as part of the collaboration, each student will identify a "home" institution upon admission. The student will then pay the tuition rate of that institution for any collaboration-related classes.   Each institution will retain the tuition and fees for the classes it teaches/delivers as part of the collaboration

\
7b. Any Special fee(s)?

The NSHE Board of Regents has repeatedly expressed concern about the impact of special fees.   Especially during the recent recession, campuses had no choice but to pass certain costs on to students. It would not be unexpected for this Work Group to recommend a set of special fees to underwrite the costs of the Collaboration, but the consensus of the e-Ncore Work Group was to discourage any special fees for the proposed Master Course Collaboration. As part of a due diligence in identifying ways to ensure fiscal sustainability for the Collaboration, a wide range of funding options will be reviewed. Necessarily, the imposition of special or dedicated fees will be included as a longer-term option.

RECOMMENDATION: do not impose any special fees to help fund the Collaboration at this time.

7c. Managing cost/distribution of textbooks (e-books approach?)

Working with Third Party partners, we have the ability to better manage the costs of textbooks and related course materials. In addition, as previously discussed, select Open Educational Resources offer the potential to further reduce – or eliminate – textbook and related course material costs.

Also promising is the movement to use eTexts.   It is generally recognized that the eText is not the best solution for every student, but for the vast majority of students, this approach could produce significant cost savings for the student.

RECOMMENDATION: Textbooks: The e-Ncore Work Group endorses efforts to control textbook and related course material costs utilizing one or more of four strategies: 1) developing courses that do not require a textbook (no textbook option), 2) shifting to eTexts or custom eTexts that significantly reduce the cost to students and simply distribution, 3) develop fully open-source supported courses where appropriate, and 4) where faculty agree, adopting a single textbook to reduce student cost.

V. STUDENT SERVICES

8. Student Services

Student success is of paramount concern to all NSHE institutions. A review of nationally documented best practices for student success confirms that most institutions have been challenged in offering online courses and degrees. Invariably, students taking online courses experience a lower retention (completion) rate than students taking a traditional course. Typically, there is an approximate seven percent retention gap between online course completion and traditional course completion.

Best practices have evolved to address this gap, and the good news is that the gap can be reduced or eliminated in by the following strategies:

1. Courses must be properly designed for online delivery. The Quality Matters National Rubric guides appropriate online course design and ensures improved course quality and consistency, clearer course navigation, an enhanced learning experience and mapped assessment of course objectives and outcomes.

2.   Adequately trained faculty with training in the areas of:
   - Learning Management System functions and settings
   - How to teach online (radically different from the traditional classroom)
   - The pedagogy of online learning
   - Strategies for improved student engagement online
   - Quality Matters – related training to address clarity and effective communication
   - Student monitoring to address any potential problems early

3.   Adequately prepared students in the areas of:
   - Mandatory orientation
     - Learning online: the Learning Management System including how to do the basics
     - Strategies for student success online (study techniques, organizational skills, communication skills), ability to work independently, etc.
   - Regular student activity in the online course
   - Developing a relationship with the faculty member

There is ample evidence that following these simple strategies can greatly increase student engagement, satisfaction, and success.   But there is a critical fourth strategy for student success

4. Adequate, appropriate and accessible student services for the virtual learner.

Regional accreditation requires that the virtual student receive the equivalent level of student support as the traditional student. The typical array of student services of value to a virtual student include:
•	Tech support
•	Advising
•	Tutoring (Smarthinking)
•	Admissions & Records support
•	Financial Aid
•	Business office
•	DRC support
•	Veterans support
•	Library
•	Adult learner support (different from typical student services)

Logically, each NSHE institution having implemented its own successful online learning program already has most if not all of these identified virtual student services in place. Rather than duplicate what is already in place, the e-Ncore Work Group advocates for a more practical initial solution to ensure virtual student services are available for each student.

RECOMMENDATION: Each NSHE institution provides related virtual student services for the e-Ncore Master Course sections the institution teaches and the students the institution serves. The e-Ncore Steering Committee, along with NSHE student services professionals, will work with each NSHE institution to review student services available and support efforts to make student support seamless across NSHE institutions.

VI. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

9. Professional Development

9a. Consortium programs for professional development

The e-Ncore General Education Collaboration will be supported by a new Center for Excellence that will facilitate expanded Professional Development opportunities as a catalyst for building a culture of collaboration amongst NSHE institutions. As The Katz Report found, NSHE institutions have had success at fostering collaboration projects, but not at the scale of the Master Course Collaboration. Effective Professional Development programming can create an environment of greater trust and begin to diminish perceived difference and divisions. Specifically, all NSHE institutions must come to

understand there need be no real competition within the System; the real competition comes from outside the state and it will take a unified and coordinated NSHE to be viewed as the best higher education solution for Nevadans.

The e-Ncore administrator and Instructional Designer will work with the Steering Committee to develop a comprehensive Professional Development plan in support of the Collaboration.   Specific opportunities for faculty including the development of a mentoring program, instructional designers, student services professionals, and administrators will be included.   Professional Development training will focus on the benefits of collaboration, the critical need for improved course quality, proven teaching methods for online instruction, and strategies for improving online student completion and success.   e-Ncore will work with NSHE Professional Development professionals to coordinate programming, identify trainers and evaluate overall program success.

9b. Inter-institutional collaborations

As noted in The Katz Report, NSHE institutions have had success in developing a number of collaborations and institutions have learned from the experiences. Currently, NSHE institutions have formed consortia in LMS, Quality Matters, selected grants, and software. More needs to be done in this area, but it will require the assistance from the e-Ncore administrator to help identify additional opportunities for cooperation and to facilitate dialog, timelines and commitments.

9c. Quality Matters trainings and peer reviews

Excellent progress has been made in the creation of a Quality Matters consortium for Nevada. The four community colleges and Nevada State College have committed to working together in support of each other's efforts to implement Quality Matters certification for online courses.   The two universities are reviewing their possible role with this new consortium. To date, the five NSHE campuses in the consortium have secured a special consortium rate for Quality Matters membership, and several campuses have already enlisted each other's assistance to create peer review panels for Quality Matters certification. Training is also being shared as campuses now have a few Certified Master Reviewers to organize review panels within NSHE. This will reduce the cost of reviews – and be of great benefit to the e-Ncore General Education Collaboration.

The five campuses have made significant progress in increasing the number of faculty who are certified to participate in review panels; the e-Ncore administrator will work with all Quality Matters institutions in NSHE to promote even greater cooperation as the effort continues to expand.

9d. Training for Teaching Online

Each NSHE institution already has in place mechanisms and personnel dedicated to systematic training for the Learning Management System. All NSHE institutions also

have expanded their training to include online pedagogy, strategies for teaching online, strategies for increasing student engagement, retention and success, and improved student preparedness.

The e-Ncore General Education Collaboration can and will build on the structures already in place at each NSHE institution. Rather than duplicating what has already been accomplished, the e-Ncore Collaboration will benefit from the progress made.

The additional Professional Development trainings will focus on the next level – building a successful culture to collaborate, learning from each other, and evolving the e-Ncore relationship and offerings in support of increased accessibility and success for students.

9e. Repository training

As previously discussed, the e-Ncore General Education Collaboration will develop a module-based repository of content.   Currently, the Canvas by Instructure repository has emerged as an excellent candidate for the agreed to repository. Training will be necessary for faculty and staff, and scheduled training sessions will be included in the Professional Development plan/schedule.   Training will be coordinated via the Office of the e-Ncore administrator and provided for each NSHE institution as needed.

9f. Course content development: Module course design

Module course design has been recommended by the e-Ncore Work Group. Each module will be designed to Quality Matters standards, and will correlate with the appropriate assessment objective and/or outcome for the course. All three sources for modules – NSHE –developed, OER-developed and Third Party-developed – will be subject to the same standards and expectations. The Steering Committee working with the e-Ncore administrator, Instructional Designer, and NSHE faculty content experts, will develop and monitor the agreed to standards for content development.

9g. Annual state DE event

As discussed, the e-Ncore Collaboration will be instrumental in developing a new culture for cooperation within NSHE. The program of Professional Development will re-enforce this goal, but the e-Ncore Work Group advocates for the creation of annual NSHE event to literally bring together faculty, instructional designers and administrators for a multiple day conference.

The annual even will be coordinated by the e-Ncore administrator working with each institution's DE administrator. The annual event will tie together critical Professional Development themes and will promote a higher level of interaction – and collaboration – amongst those in attendance. The Nevada Conference on Digital Learning may be the best existing venue for this annual event. The event would be open to those actively engaged in the collaboration, but would also be open to anyone in the NSHE community interested in learning more or wanting to become a part of the NSHE collaborative environment for online learning.

9h. Strategies in support of greater efficiency/cost-savings and essential to the long-term success of NSHE in meeting the challenges of external competition

As identified elsewhere in this – and other –sections of the Report, a commitment to increased collaboration within NSHE will be nearly impossible without the identification of additional resources and capabilities. The NSHE collaboration opens a new door to approaching the needs of our students in a variety of creative and increasingly efficient ways.   The eNcore Work Group is in support of the following strategies:

• Center for Excellence

The Katz Report calls for the creation of a Center for Excellence to coordinate Professional Development opportunities and to encourage the exploration and adoption of emerging best practices, student success and engagement strategies, and to support the evolution of course development strategies. Funding is currently not identified for a Center (or Centers) within NSHE. This should be a priority of the newly created consortium to identify the best solution for Nevada– that should include our K-12 partners – and the best strategy for securing funding. This can be a grant-worthy project or perhaps the case can be made within the state budget process. The resolution of this and the establishment of one or more centers should be a priority of the newly formed NSHE consortium.

The e-Ncore Work Group supports this approach but would encourage more discussion – and the active engagement of our faculty – to determine the best approach for NSHE. The current proposal includes an approach that will allow the objectives of a Center for Excellence to be nurtured jointly by all NSHE institutions. This will allow NSHE to successfully launch the General Education collaboration, but a more structured and formalized solution will be essential to expanding the NSHE collaboration going forward.

• NSHE-based licensing of key software solutions

A commitment to a shared Learning Management System (LMS) is a critical first-step in affirming the importance of collaboration amongst NSHE institutions – and our K-12 partners and also recognizes the importance of online learning for NSHE institutions in the 21st Century.

It is the recommendation of the e-Ncore Work Group that a centralized funding solution for a system-wide LMS be identified and the statewide contract managed in partnership with System Computing Services (SCS). It is further recommended that this be a net new funding solution and that the funds not be redirected from NSHE institutions. The logic for this is simple: establishing a new revenue solution while allowing NSHE institutions to retain the funds they have directed towards LMS licensing with serve as a clear indication of our system-wide commitment to online learning, will foster a positive view towards the benefits of collaboration, and will allow individual institutions to redirect current licensing funding to other critical needs within their eLearning programs.

Based on this approach, it behooves NSHE to consider doing this with other major contracts and solutions related to the support of online education. This is consistent with what other state systems have done and will help to define a collaborative spirit amongst NSHE institutions and our System leadership.

- SARA

Nevada was the fifth state to formally join the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) developed by WICHE.   SARA represents the future of online education in higher education and provides a major impetus for NSHE to develop the abilities necessary to effective compete in Nevada – and beyond.

VII.   ISSUES AND OBSTACLES

Throughout its history, NSHE has respected the autonomy and independence of each institution. At the same time, given the advantages of a smaller system and the unique character of higher education in Nevada, NSHE has also encouraged efforts to create a more seamless and consistent relationship amongst the seven institutions.   There has been success including: Common Course Numbering, the decision to move to a single Student Information System (PeopleSoft), and efforts to improve student transfer with identified articulation transfer agreements,

The proposal to develop a General Education (e-Ncore) within NSHE is a significant new step towards a greater level of engagement and cooperation. The process will necessarily create the opportunity for dialog and progress in redefining the relationship between and amongst NSHE institutions. The Distance Education programs at the seven institutions have essentially been doing this since the mid-1990s.   At this level, the campuses have experienced along track record of dialog and cooperation. In the past ten years, NSHE has also witnessed a ramping up of the type of cooperation and collaboration critical to the success of the proposed e-Ncore collaboration.

As the Work Group deliberated, it became apparent that it lacked either the appropriate participants to the discussion or lacked the experience and authority event o make certain recommendations. To address that reality, the work group identified several issue areas that should be addressed by the appropriate administrators at each NSHE institution in consultation as a system community. Specifically

1. Faculty Compensation
2. Faculty Assignment and Workload
3. Faculty Selection
4. Tuition and Fees

These have been specifically addressed in the e-Ncore Report recommendations. The over-arching recommendation is to follow the successful model developed by the State of Tennessee for each of the faculty-related issues identified.

-       Third-Party Partnership

This remains a controversial component of The Katz Report and Recommendations. The Work Group has monitored the national trends in this regard and has documented a number of setbacks in other states where a significant commitment to a Third Party partner occurred. Texas experienced a reversal of roles regarding course content development and marketing in less than a year from the launch of their Third Party partnership. The California State University system also dramatically renegotiated its relationship – again in less than a year from their initial launch.

On the other hand, successful collaborations such as the Tennessee Regents Online effort reported an excellent working relationship with their Third Party partners. They key difference was in determining the appropriate role and ensuring that faculty remained in control of appropriate pedagogical and curriculum development role. This approach has been mirrored in other consortia reviewed by the Work Group as well.

-       A single Learning Management System for the Collaboration

This has been addressed in the recent letter distributed by the Chancellor (November 3, 2014) which confirms the move to a single Learning Management System when current contractual commitments end. This is a very important step towards greater system-wide collaboration and is consistent with the trend in a growing number of state systems.

-       Faculty Concerns

Of all of the issues and obstacles reviewed here, faculty concerns have consistently been the most pronounced and will require attention going forward. Failure to be forthright and engaged on this issue will result in a significant degradation in the potential success of any NSHE collaboration.

The Katz Report represents a "game-changer" for NSHE. It offers the first-ever assessment of the state's eLearning programs within the context of phenomenal - and rapid - change in higher education. Mr. Katz identified several realities that NSHE must deal with:
1. Currently, Nevada loses the greatest percentage of its higher education students to out-of-state competition of any state in the Union. Students choose NOT to attend NSHE institutions.
2. Competition from providers outside the State of Nevada will only increase
3. Other states have already responded by developing state-wide online collaboration to respond to the increased competition and have been very successful in doing so
4. Mr. Katz points out that NSHE institutions must respond as well or risk being left behind.

5. Mr. Katz also points out that Third Party partners have become welcomed partners with most state consortia. Such partnerships can increase cost efficiencies and facilitate operations.

To date, NSHE faculty engagement has been limited and uneven during the course of the eLearning Taskforce process.   Indeed, faculty representatives have been appointed to the Taskforce as well to the separate work groups. They do their best to share information with colleagues at their institution, but there has been no organized communication plan and the dissemination of information is incomplete and open to misunderstanding. As we complete this stage of the Taskforce process, it is valuable to open a dialog with faculty at each institution to effectively communicate key recommendations and openly discuss the process.

Over the past several months, members of the eNcore Work Group have discussed the eLearning Taskforce with faculty at their institutions, and key concerns from the faculty viewpoint have included:
-   A belief that faculty recommendations are being ignored and steamrollered by system-level objectives
-   A belief that the proposed consortium may have the eventual intention to diminish or replace the current tenured faculty model of NSHE
-   A concern that the Third Party solutions are significantly inferior to the quality of course design and content historically developed by NSHE faculty
-   The notion that "student completion at any cost" subjugates a more traditional NSHE model that valued rigor
-   The view that the original recommendations of The Katz Report are a "done deal" and the Taskforce process exists to implement those recommendations regardless of what NSHE faculty think
-    Further, the view that Mr. Katz is simply trying to do in Nevada what his consultant firm has done in other states – launch large-scale Third Party- driven consortia

As the Taskforce process moves forward, the eNcore Work Group strongly encourages a commitment to:
-   Improved communication which in most instances should reassure everyone regarding the value placed on NSHE faculty involvement and recommendations
-   Expanded dialog with faculty regarding current and future challenges and faculty involvement in the development of a longer-term plan for action to better position NSHE as the primary provider of higher education opportunities for its residents.

VIII. REVIEW OF SIMILAR COLLABORATION

The e-Ncore Work Group began its work in March of 2014. As part of its charge, the Work Group was tasked with the review of current eLearning collaborations in higher education.   In doing so, the Work Group sought to identify, where possible, "lessons learned" and/or "ideas and approaches that work". In addition, the Work Group focused on identifying any approaches that might be helpful to NSHE in developing its own collaboration.

The Work Group worked with a comprehensive list of state-level consortia which is listed on the Instructional Technology Council (ITC) website. This list is updated on a regular basis and includes essential contact information and website URL addresses.

In addition, the Work Group reviewed a report from the California Community College Online Initiative: Governance Models for Online Consortia   Hanover Research October 2013 (http://ccconlineed.org/documents/category/1-grant-documents). The report provided a useful synopsis of thirteen state consortia. Work Group members reviewed the various state consortia working with the same criteria for initial review: he consortium consists of community colleges, state colleges and universities, the consortium exists to jointly offer classes, programs and/or degrees, and the consortium is successfully up and operating with enrollments and has developed essential student recruitment, enrollment, record keeping and student support solutions.   Based on the criteria, the Tennessee Board of Regents (Regents Online) consortium, the Florida Virtual Campus, Maryland Onine and State University of New York (SUNY consortia were identified for further review. Each of the consortia offer both lessons learned and relevant ideas for NSHE as it embarks on its commitment to developing a statewide consortium of its own. The eNcore Work Group participated in webinars with three of the four and the chair participated in a conference call for the fourth:

- Regents Online (Tennessee Board of Regents) (www.rodp.org):

- 6 universities, 13 community colleges and 27 technical colleges (all the institutions of the Tennessee System)
- Created by the Tennessee Board of Regents System
- Military Friendly Distinction
- Founded in 2001
- Offering fully online programs and degrees
- From the Regents Online website:

The online education offered through Regents Online mirrors the same education offered at the physical campus locations. All participating institutions are regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), while several programs have additional discipline-specific national accreditation status. Students have the opportunity to choose a "home campus" from among the 6 universities awarding Bachelor's and Master's degrees, the 13 community colleges providing Associate degrees and the 27 colleges of applied technology offering technical certificates and diplomas. Individuals apply for admission, register for courses, and are awarded degrees, diplomas, or certificates from the home campus. In 2012, Regents Online education programs served the educational needs of over 41,000 students (200,000 annual enrollments for Tennessee System).

- Florida Virtual Campus (www.flvc.org)

- Participation by 39 Florida community colleges, state colleges and universities
- Launched in 2012
- Created by the Florida Legislature

- Offering fully online programs and degrees
- From the Florida Virtual Campus website:

We believe that everyone has the chance for success through education.

COMPLETE FLORIDA is your complete pathway to a college degree. Over 45 degree programs and certificates are available for you offered from state and private institutions throughout Florida. All programs are fully online and accelerated so that you can get started right away and figure out how to fit courses into your busy schedule. Complete Florida programs use prior learning assessment to determine how to accept your existing knowledge, experiences and college credit. You will always have an excellent support team that will be there with you throughout your entire program. All Complete Florida programs are aligned to career advancement and jobs throughout the state. Try Complete Florida today! You will be glad you took the first step toward completing your college degree!

• Maryland Online (www.marylandonline.org)

- Launched in 1999 with 12 charter members; now 20 community colleges, state colleges and the University of Maryland participate
- Created by Maryland institutions
- Does not offer programs/degrees; rather, is course-based
- From the Maryland Online website:

Maryland Online does not grant degrees or have its own college courses. Rather, each member institution can adopt online courses from another member when a course is not available at its own institution. This cooperative arrangement benefits all of the students at Maryland Online institutions, as students are able to take a variety of courses that might not be available at their home college.

• State University of New York (SUNY) Open SUNY (www.opensuny.edu)

-Launched in 2013 (but antecedents to 1994)
-Connects 64 SUNY institutions by offering classes
-Serves needs of each SUNY institution (professional development, et.al.) and also as a portal for collaboration

-From the Open SUNY website:

Imagine a learning experience with no boundaries—no limits to accessibility, reach, or possibilities.

At SUNY, we are transforming the landscape of online learning. Drawing on our rich history of innovation, we're placing the outstanding educational opportunities and talented faculty from our 64 campuses at your fingertips. Open SUNY is the latest step in our long-standing tradition of doing things bigger and better. No other

institution has brought together an online learning environment to serve students at this scale and breadth. Once again, we are taking the lead.

Open SUNY is a SUNY-wide collaboration that opens the door to world-class online-enabled learning opportunities. Open SUNY is not a new degree program or a new school; it's a seamless way for you to access the courses, degrees, professors, and rich academics of all 64 SUNY campuses flexibly—wherever and whenever you want. For the first time, SUNY is delivering its renowned high-quality education with an unprecedented breadth of tools, services, and supports designed to help you be successful.

RECOMMENDATION: Collaboration Model: the collaboration is modeled after the highly successful Tennessee Board of Regents collaboration (ROCC: Regents Online Campus Collaborative), which was founded in 2001, and to date, has served more than 14,000 online students.

http://www.rodp.org/sites/default/files/ROCC_General_booklet.pdf

www.rodp.org

IX. REVIEW OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding Principles

As the work group develops its recommendations, the Task Force is requesting that the final recommendations satisfy the following guiding principles:

Guiding Principles	Response
1. Does the recommended model promote greater inter-institutional collaboration in the area of online courses, certificates and degrees? Does it demonstrate innovation and strategic partnerships? Will it have a positive impact on student access?	-The proposed collaboration a new level of cooperation amongst NSHE institutions -The proposed collaboration will create the first-ever system-wide online program and will include one or more 3rd Party partners -The General Education classes will improve student access and remove current barriers to degree completion.
2. Does the recommended model provide for increased efficiencies across NSHE and does it reduce redundancy of general education offerings among NSHE institutions?	-The proposed collaboration will facilitate a system wide dialog to increase efficiencies and to share curriculum – ultimately, it will reduce redundancy
3. Does the recommended model support increased degree completions in Nevada?	-The proposed collaboration removes a barrier that slows degree completion. The new collaboration will also promote increased dialog amongst NSHE institutions to develop new strategies for jointly offering new course options and degrees
4. Does the program plan demonstrate a commitment to accessibility with Learning Management Systems (LMS), textbooks, and related technologies and services?	-The proposed collaboration ensures ADA compliance (Canvas by Instructure LMS, Quality Matters National Rubric for course design, & ADA compliance as best practices

5. What available data demonstrate that the recommended program plan is likely to have a positive impact on student success? Are there meta-analyses or large-scale data sets suggesting that this strategy is likely to result in higher levels of student learning and satisfaction?	Data from each campus as well as the data warehouse was used to support identification of the shared General Educations courses. The e-Ncore Work Group also used data provided in the Katz Report regarding national trends and solicited data from selected presenters
6. Does evidence suggest that the program plan is likely to have a positive impact on retention, progression, and completion for a particular student population (e.g., adult students, underrepresented students, etc.)?	The focus remains on adult learners as a targeted group to market to and support. Data from the State of Nevada confirms a large potential number of adult learners interested in certificates and degrees. An online delivery method is demonstrated as effective in the support of adult learners as well as in their likely completion
7. Does the recommended model provide scalability across the NSHE while simultaneously allowing for clear mission differentiation across individual campuses and program specific learning outcomes as dictated by accreditation standards? (An example would be an online learning preparation course where learning strategies could be system-wide, but unique aspects of each institution would be included as modules).	The current proposal is separated from each institution's program already in place BUT seeks to maximize the shared capabilities of each institution in support of a joint NSHE collaboration. Members of the e-Ncore Work Group view this proposal as a first step towards greater collaboration and have proposed a structure that fosters regular interaction and online program-related strategic planning amongst all NSHE institutions
8. Does the program plan demonstrate commitment to professional standards (e.g., Quality Matters) to ensure academic integrity, academic quality and consistency, and best practices?	Essential elements for quality, support for emerging national trends and best practices and quality course development utilizing instructional designers are included in the proposal

9. Does the estimated budget demonstrate shared instructional technology resources and staffing across NSHE? (An example would be a shared resource center that would make NSHE competitive with the Utah Educational and Network and similar systems in California and Colorado.)	A number of elements and strategies are included to encourage and provide for a greater sharing of resources. In addition, the collaboration commits to identifying funding (e.g. through grants, line-item, etc.) to support a more structured solution to sustain/coordinate needed training, course development, and strategies to enhance increased collaborative activity.

X. NEXT STEPS

Intent of NSHE Collaboration: the proposed collaboration is designed to improve student access to higher education in Nevada, provide relief for students delayed in their pathway for completion, and improve student completion rates. In addition, position NSHE to respond to increased competition.

This Report contains a variety of recommendations in support of the development and implantation of an NSHE General Education Collaboration designed to better serve the needs of students and to keep them on pace to completion. The recommendations also support the establishment of an organizational approach that will support wider and more regular collaborations amongst NSHE's eLearning programs, faculty, and staff. It is anticipated that the spirit of collaboration will grow and allow the growth of greater opportunities for our students and faculty.

Based on the expectation that NSHE will ultimately commit to moving forward with the General Education Collaboration, the Work Group is mindful of the following:

- It will take time to set up the Collaboration – the initial set-up and organization as well as resolving identified "key" decisions on faculty recruitment, workload, tuition and fees, FTE distribution, etc. argue for a formal launch of the collaboration no later than the 2016 Fall term.
- Initial efforts should focus on the development and launch of the Phase I General Education classes
- The approach to classes and degrees should be consistent with the norm with other state consortia – not to develop a set of classes or degrees that are unique to the consortium but rather to use the consortium to promote the existing classes and degrees from each institution.
- The consortium should prioritize the refinement of the Center of Excellence patterned after the success of the model used by the State University of New York (SUNY) System. The approach is more distributive – the NSHE approach should be to have each institution play a role in the center (rather than assigning the center to just one of the institutions). If funding is identified, this structure can be put into place relatively quickly. The goal would be to secure at least one Instructional Designer for each institution that is dedicated to the support of the collaboration.
- The consortium should launch the shared resources model as quickly as possible to further support the consortium with expanded resources in support of curriculum, learning and student engagement
- NSHE should build on the plan to establish a shared LMS (one LMS for NSHE institutions by developing a system of NSHE-level support for the cost of other mission critical licensing/software – this is consistent with the practices of other state consortia. The notion of creating a set of centralized cloud-based servers should also be considered
- The current model used by most state consortia involves the development of a stand-alone website in support of consortium offerings. Certainly this type of solution is

understandable and is indeed recommended by the Work Group for the NSHE collaboration as well. However, in the true spirit of "seamlessness" for our students, the new collaboration should explore ways to create a single pathway of admission, registration, and student support including the possibility of co- placement of Collaboration courses within each PeopleSoft instance

- The new collaboration should also prioritize development of a medium to long- term Master Plan that includes: possible strategies for expanding the NSHE collaboration, how best to respond to external competition, NSHE and SARA, the improved recruitment of Active Adult Learners and the improved recruitment of under- represented populations.
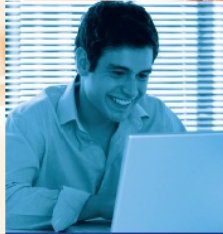
ONLINE DEGREES & COURSES

Your path to **GRADUATION & CAREER SUCCESS**

www.rodp.org

R&CC

REGENTS ONLINE CAMPUS COLLABORATIVE

A Tennessee Board of Regents Online Education Initiative

Table of Contents

The Collaborative at a Glance

The Regents Online Campus Collaborative is an award-winning program that brings together postsecondary educational resources from the 6 state universities, 13 community colleges, and 27 colleges of applied technology located across the state of Tennessee. Through Regents Online, students can earn Associates, Bachelors and Masters degrees, Nursing Post Masters certificates and occupational diplomas/certificates from institutions in the collaborative.

Launched in Fall 2001, the Regents Online Campus Collaborative (ROCC) has grown from 1,048 students to over 13,200 students in 2013. This unique program was developed under the direction of the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR), one of the nation's largest systems of public higher education with a combined annual enrollment of over 200,000 students. In 2013, the Board of Regents awarded academic credentials to over 34,000 individuals.

The **REGENTS ONLINE CAMPUS COLLABORATIVE** is one of the more robust efforts to promote online learning in the country.

SOURCE: *U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2012 Leaders & Laggards Series*

www.rodp.org
roccinfo@tbr.edu
1-888-223-0023

National and Regional Accreditation – A Quality Indicator

4

Accreditation is a process of validation in which colleges and universities of higher learning are evaluated. It's an indicator that an institution or program meets standards of quality and that there is a commitment to continuously seek ways to enhance the quality of education and training provided.

Why is accreditation important to you? The accreditation process offers you a better chance of credits transferring to other institutions should you decide to obtain a Bachelor's, Master's or doctoral level of education. Accreditation also enables companies and hiring managers to filter job candidates based upon the accreditation status of the institution that awarded their degree.

Regents Online degree programs and courses are offered through Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) institutions.

All TBR campuses are accredited by:
The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033-4097
Phone: 1-404-679-4500

All Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology are accredited by:
Council on Occupational Education (COE)
7840 Roswell Road
Building 300, Suite 325
Atlanta, GA 30350
Phone: 1-770-396-3898
Website: www.council.org

The Master's of Science in Nursing program is accredited by:
The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850
Atlanta, GA 30326
Telephone: 1-404-975-5000
Website: www.acenursing.org

The Health Information Technology program is accredited by:
The Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM)

Community College and University Programs

The Regents Online Campus Collaborative offers online degree programs and courses to meet the needs of you, your family, your employer, your community and your state.

Associate Degree Programs
: Early Childhood Education
: Criminal Justice
: Health Information Technology
: Web Technology
: General Studies (University Parallel)
: Teacher Aides/Paraprofessionals Preparation (University Parallel)
: Professional Studies with a concentration in Information Technology

Bachelor Degree Programs
: Professional Studies with concentrations in Health Administration, Information Technology, Organizational Leadership, International Organizational Leadership
: Interdisciplinary Studies (General Studies, Liberal Studies, University Studies)

Master Degree Programs
: Education
: Nursing with a concentration in Nursing Education
: Nursing with a concentration in Nursing Administration
: Nursing with a concentration in Nursing Informatics
: Nursing with a concentration in Family Nurse Practitioner
: RN to MSN Bridge Option
: Professional Studies with concentrations in Strategic Leadership, Human Resources Leadership, Training and Development

Post Masters Certificates
: Family Nurse Practitioner
: Nursing Administration
: Nursing Education
: Nursing Informatics

Teacher Education Credentials
: Additional Endorsements
: Occupational Licensure
: Transitional Licensure
: Professional Development

Tennessee College of Applied Technology Programs

The Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology provide industry current training for workers to obtain the technical skills and knowledge necessary for advancement in today's competitive job market. Through their workforce development mission, the colleges help businesses and industries satisfy their need for a well-trained, skilled workforce.

Technical Certificates
: LPN Refresher Course
: Dementia Care
: General Office Assistant
: Software Applications Specialist
: PC Operator
: Information Processing Technician
: Detail Drafter
: CAD Technician Certificate for Practicing Professionals

Technical Diplomas
: Administrative Assistant
: Accounting Administrative Assistant
: Medical Administrative Assistant
: Computer Support Specialist
: Web Developer
: Computer Information Systems
: Drafting and CAD Technician

5

Choose Your School from a Lineup of Nationally Respected Schools

When you apply for admission to a Regents Online program, you select a "home campus" from the schools shown below. Your credentials (degree, diploma, certificate, endorsements, licensure) are awarded by the institution you choose as your "home campus."

Universities and Community Colleges

TENNESSEE COLLEGES OF APPLIED TECHNOLOGY

Athens
Chattanooga
Covington
Crossville
Crump
Dickson
Elizabethton
Harriman
Hartsville
Hohenwald
Jacksboro
Jackson
Knoxville
Livingston
McKenzie
McMinnville
Memphis
Morristown
Murfreesboro
Nashville
Newbern
Oneida/Huntsville
Paris
Pulaski
Ripley
Shelbyville
Whiteville

NOTE: *Some programs are only offered at selected schools or locations. Therefore, your "home campus" choices may be fewer.*
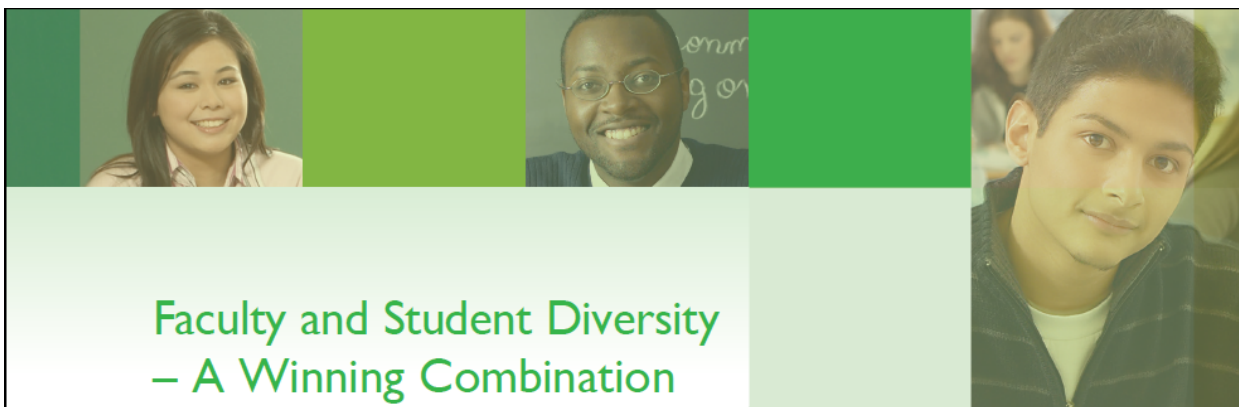
Faculty and Student Diversity – A Winning Combination

As a Regents Online student, you gain access to highly-qualified faculty members from both your "home campus" and other institutions across the TBR system. For example, your English course might be taught by a faculty member from Middle Tennessee State University while your Math class is delivered by a professor from Tennessee Technological University. Our diverse pool of faculty members from across the campus collaborative gives you exposure to a wide range of opinions, philosophies, regional perspectives and experiences that you might not otherwise receive in an online or on-campus setting.

Your online classmates are from all walks of life — a working mom trying to juggle a family and a career, a displaced worker pursuing a new career path, a high school student taking dual enrollment courses to earn college credit, a recent college graduate interested in adding credentials to their resume, an empty nester looking to reenter the workforce. Odds are you will find someone with educational and career aspirations similar to yours.

No Difference between Online and On-Campus Degrees

As a Regents Online student, you will receive the same certificate and degree award as on-campus students. Your transcripts and diploma will not differentiate whether your courses were taken online or on campus. Upon program completion, your diploma will be awarded from the institution you selected as your "home campus."

24/7 Convenience on Your Terms

The Regents Online Campus Collaborative delivers college courses and programs to you at home, at work, on the road, at the library or on vacation; any time of day or night, including weekends. No more long waits in lines or hours away from your job and family. No commuting, no parking fees, no childcare arrangements, no last-minute changes to your calendar. You plan your education around your busy work and family schedule. You can register online, buy your books and visit the library anytime, anywhere!

Easy Transfer of General Education Core Courses within Tennessee Colleges and Universities

A 41-hour lower division General Education core is offered at all TBR universities and community colleges. This core is fully transferrable within the TBR system, participating TICUA private colleges and universities, and the University of Tennessee. This means you don't have to retake core courses when you transfer to another school.

Other avenues of transfer are available, including course equivalency agreements for the transfer of specific courses and articulation agreements for the transfer of programs.

Advisors at your "home campus" will provide you with guidance regarding transfer and career preparation based upon campus practices and policies.

Knowledgeable Advisors You Can Trust

We understand that decisions about your education are some of the most important and difficult ones you can make in your lifetime. Once you've determined your interests, goals and career aspirations, our knowledgeable campus advisors can provide you with important information vital to making your decision with confidence. We want to be a resource you can rely upon and trust, rather than one that puts personal and program interests above your interests.

We are ready to answer questions you have about:

College versus vocational programs
Two-year versus four-year programs
Programs of study
Course offerings
Admissions criteria
Application process

Program costs
Class sizes
Learning in an online environment
Technical requirements for online learning
Transfer credit

Affordability and Value – A Wise Financial Choice

Why pay more and possibly incur significant student loan debt when you can go through Regents Online and earn an affordable education from a respected institution? On a comparative basis, Regents Online courses and programs can be up to half the cost of programs offered by other online education providers and private institutions.

For a current tuition and fee schedule, visit our website at **www.rodp.org** and click on the Financial Aid & Tuition tab.

Financial aid and scholarships may be available for those who qualify. Both sources of funding are administered by your "home campus."

Access to Virtual Support Services

Your academic success is very important to us. As a Regents Online student, you have access to a wide array of support services throughout your online learning experience.

Technical Support Assistance – If you experience problems logging in to your course, have questions about using features in the Learning Management System, or need clarification on policies and procedures, contact our Technical Support Services Help Desk. Available during the day, evenings, weekends and most holidays, our friendly and knowledgeable staff can be reached via phone or through our online help portal. Knowledge books and forums on the portal offer self-service lookups to frequently-asked questions. If you can't find answers to your questions through the self-help options, simply file an electronic ticket detailiing your need for assistance. A Help Desk staff member will respond to your ticket at their earliest convenience.

Prior to the start of your semester, you can access documentation on the ROCC website to become familiar with learning management system features you will routinely use throughout your term of study. The documentation provides screen shots, detailed explanations and step-by-step instructions.

Virtual Bookstore – No more waiting in line to buy books! The Virtual Bookstore makes it easy to buy books and software online from the comfort of your home. Log on to the Virtual Bookstore website, select your course, load your shopping cart, checkout and pay with a major credit card or book voucher. It doesn't get much easier than this!

At the end of your term, you can sell your textbooks back to the bookstore online, all day, every day. During major buyback periods, you could get up to 50% cash back for your textbooks based on condition and demand.

Access to Virtual Support Services (Continued)

Virtual Library – When you need to conduct research for a term paper or are interested in broadening your knowledge on a subject, our Virtual Library is open 24/7 to assist you in your search for information. Instead of spending hours in vain looking for information on the Internet, turn to the Virtual Library's collection of online databases, journals, reference materials, eBooks, directories and streaming videos, plus more for the info you need. All of these resources are available at no cost to you. If you need help getting started, simply turn to our highly-trained librarians available via email, live chat and reference desk phone support for quick and friendly assistance.

Smarthinking Tutoring – Stumped by a math problem? Need a new pair of eyes to review your essay for grammatical accuracy? Having trouble understanding a complex chemistry concept? With Smarthinking, you get live one-on-one online help and support from experienced tutors in Math, Math en Español, Writing, ESOL, Spanish, General Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Economics, Statistics and Accounting.

Continuing Your Education After Graduation

Regents Online offers courses designed for professional advancement as well as personal enrichment. Some courses are offered during scheduled timeframes throughout the year while others are available on demand. Individuals attending these courses can earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for certification and/or recertification to maintain credentials in a specified field of work or study.

The courses cover a wide range of topics including:

Allied Health	Human Resources	Nursing/Healthcare
CPS® and CAP® Reviews	NCLEX Licensure Examination Prep	Physical Therapy
Early Childhood Development	Law Enforcement	Public Safety

CPS® and CAP® are registered trademarks of the International Association of Administrative Professionals.

Getting Started – The Application Process

To get started on your degree program or taking selected courses, follow these steps:

STEP ONE: Complete the prospective student profile available online at **www.rodp.org**

STEP TWO: Apply <u>directly</u> to the school of your choice for admission

STEP THREE: Follow "home campus" admissions procedures and deadlines

STEP FOUR: Determine how you will pay for your education

- ✅ Check out tuition fees and deadlines for your "home campus"
- ✅ Apply for scholarships through your "home campus"
- ✅ Apply for Financial Aid at: **www.fafsa.gov**

STEP FIVE: Obtain acceptance from your home campus

STEP SIX: Follow any additional requirements (advising, orientation, online account setup, etc.) recommended by your "home campus"

STEP SEVEN: Register for ROCC courses through your "home campus"

- ✅ Perform a system check on your computer hardware and software
- ✅ Purchase your books through the Regents Online virtual bookstore
- ✅ Log in to your class on the first day of the semester

www.rodp.org | roccinfo@tbr.edu | 1-888-223-0023

www.rodp.org
EMAIL: roccinfo@tbr.edu
1-888-223-0023

1415 Murfreesboro Road
Suite 682
Nashville, TN 37217

TECH SUPPORT
http://help.rodp.org/

ROCC is a Tennessee Board of Regents Online Education Initiative.